

THE INDEPENDENT

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The big match
Leeds United v Aston Villa



The making of
the modern girl

Part 2: Love, sex and relationships

Children and
TV: the facts

New Family Life section

The revenge of
the nerds

12-page Network pull-out



The crisis in
English cricket

A special investigation

The question is not whether we burn cattle, but how many and how soon



Calves destined to be dairy cows, then meat

Photograph: David Sandison

The Government stands on the edge of an abyss in public confidence. This is not just a question of measuring the immediate threat to public health, nor the fate of farmers and butchers. The BSE affliction is in danger of contaminating the British body politic.

A completely reliable, accurate account of the dangers posed to human health remains elusive. That, however, does not justify complacency. The risk of catastrophe is sufficiently large to justify bold mobilisation of all the Government's resources.

Consumers are beyond bland reassurance. We need the kind of honesty that accepts what we know is limited but on the basis of what we do know, here is a rescue plan that carries real conviction. This is a time for careful judgment but it is not time for irresolute caution.

More than half the population is considering not buying beef; not because of panic, but because it seems the most sane course of action, on present information. If people do stop buying in large numbers, the industry is heading for a collapse that will rock everything from public finances to the shape of

INDEPENDENT
rural England. Public policy needs to stay ahead, forecasting the need for compensation, incineration, waste disposal. The Government should announce a plan to accomplish two things.

One is longer term. It is for restructuring the food and agricultural businesses. Consumer choice will probably effect radical change during the next few years. Government needs to play its part by, for example, replacing the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

The other requirement is immediate: it involves removing from the food chain all cattle that may have eaten contaminated feed. If that means slaughtering all cattle that have not been grass-fed throughout their lives, so be it.

If, in practice, it means wholesale slaughter, is there now any alternative? The cattle are liable to end up being slaughtered, because no one wants to buy them. The consequences of widespread incineration of the herd are huge. The consequences of inaction could be calamitous.



Mass slaughter: In previous BSE scares cattle carcasses burnt

Photograph: Pacemaker

Government considers slaughtering up to 4.5 million

PAUL FIELD and JOHN RENTOUX

The Government yesterday raised the daunting prospect of the slaughter of 4.5 million cattle in a bid to combat the threat of BSE spreading to humans.

The Agriculture Minister Douglas Hogg said that the Government was considering the slaughter of older cattle on the advice of scientific advisers that there have been few cases of BSE confirmed in cattle under the age of 30 months.

Speaking on BBC TV's *On the Record*, Mr Hogg said: "A slaughter policy is not excluded. By focusing on 30 months as the advisory committee have done, they are actually focusing on the core of the problem."

The Spongiform Encephalopathy

Advisory Committee met in Berkshire over the weekend and produced recommendations which will be given to ministers this morning.

The committee is expected to recommend to the Government that parents with young children should be warned of the dangers of feeding them beef and beef products. It is thought that the scientists could cover children of primary school age. Stephen Dorrell, Secretary of State for Health, and Mr Hogg are likely to make statements in the Commons this afternoon.

Farmers and abattoirs

warned last night that the slaughter of 40 per cent of the 11.8 million national herd would destroy the beef industry and have a disastrous impact

on milk supplies. They admitted public confidence in British beef would only be restored once cattle are incinerated but stressed an extensive compensation package would be needed to save their livelihoods.

Supermarkets reporting a sharp drop in beef sales, are likely to announce later today whether they will follow the example of McDonald's by banning British beef.

The slaughter move came as it emerged that experts are considering the possibility that British sheep may have become infected with "mad cow disease", which has been linked to 10 human cases of the degenerative brain condition Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease.

SEAC is considering whether to ban sheep offal as well as cat-

fe offal from entering the human food chain, following experiments in which sheep fed with BSE-contaminated material developed the disease.

The European Union agriculture commissioner Franz Fischler is expected to respond in Brussels tonight to a Government request for financial help for 100,000 United Kingdom beef farmers facing ruin.

Mr Hogg said he hoped the EU would provide help: "I shall be looking to the European Union for financial support should we require a great deal of public expenditure."

He held talks with the European

commission on Friday. A spokesman said the Commission was keen to help with the elimination of animals "on the basis of preventive veterinary or scientific need", but that there might be difficulty in apportioning blame for past actions.

A complete ban on UK beef exports to all 14 other EU countries is expected to be imposed today after a meeting in Brussels of veterinary officers representing EU governments.

Ten EU countries have already banned British beef.

Harriet Harman, Labour's health spokeswoman, also asked Professor John Pattison,

chairman of SEAC, further detailed questions at a meeting on Friday. She accepted the committee could not put a figure on how risky eating beef is, but was told that it can judge that some things are riskier than others.

She asked for league tables of relative risk for different ages, different parts of cattle, different kinds of meat, and for a list of beef products ranked in risk order.

She also asked that the committee set out the range of options for Government action in addition to its recommended action. "Then we would be able to see what judgment the Government has made," she said.

Labour favours slaughtering herds with the highest percentages of infected cattle, a move which Mr Hogg described

as another option. Of the 100,000 cattle farmers in Britain one-third have had cases of BSE, which would mean 4 mil-

lion cattle would have to be destroyed.

Farmers warned the proposal would devastate milk supplies because dairy cows which would only have started producing milk in the last six months would also be destroyed. One said: "It is not economically viable. BSE is not transmitted to milk so there is no danger."

Last night a senior vet warned that disposing of cattle carcasses from a mass slaughter would pose a major public health problem. Nick Henderson, a former publisher of *Veterinary Times*, said pits would have to be dug on farms, the cattle shot with a bolt pistol and the carcasses burnt. "They would have to be destroyed by fire. I cannot think of any other way of disposing of them," he said.

IN BRIEF

Aston Villa take Coca-Cola Cup

Aston Villa beat Leeds United 3-0 in the final of the Coca-Cola Cup at Wembley. Manchester United went three points clear of Newcastle United at the head of the Premier League after a 1-0 win over Tottenham Hotspur. Sport section

Sea Empress dispute

A dispute has broken out between the Government and environmental groups over the inquiry into last month's Sea Empress oil spill.

Today's weather

Chilly easterly wind and scattered showers: rain in the South-east. Section Two, page 25

BBC faces legal action on Noddy

MARIANNE MACDONALD
Media Correspondent

ceding its rights to Noddy, Blyton's most famous character.

They claim that not only did it pay a fraction of the real value for the first two Noddy series, but the corporation made the third without the right to do so. They also claim that the BBC has published dozens of Noddy spin-offs in the form of dolls and picture books despite the fact it only has rights to exploit the two Noddy series, not Noddy in general.

Darrell Waters has now been renamed the Enid Blyton Company by the Trocadero, which is renegotiating the BBC contracts and demanding "sub-



The BBC made £14m from Noddy and Big Ears last year

stantial" retrospective payments. Last year BBC Enterprises - now BBC Worldwide - is understood to have made about £14m from Noddy, including foreign sales of the series, while Darrell Waters made £150,000.

Tougher A-level exams planned

JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor

Plans for tougher vocational qualifications and more challenging exams at GCSE and A-level will be put forward this week by Sir Ron Dearing, the Government's chief adviser on the curriculum.

His review, which will bring the most fundamental changes to qualifications for 16- to 19-year-olds since the start of A-levels more than 40 years ago, is expected to be accepted in full by Gillian Shephard, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment. She will back proposals to bring in outside checks on vocational qualifications and ensure that their

content is made clearer.

On exams, Sir Ron's report proposes a harder GCSE maths exam for the brightest students, to bridge the gap between GCSE and A-level and university maths.

At A-level, exam boards will be encouraged to offer extra S-level papers to extend the most able pupils. The new exams will be more closely tied to A-levels so they fit better into school timetables. There will be a new intermediate exam, the Advanced Subsidiary, to be taken after a year in the sixth form.

Sixteen-year-olds will be able to embark on four or five subjects before deciding after one year to specialise in two or three for A-level. At present

most students study two or three A-levels for two years.

The report envisages that some students will take a mixture of academic and vocational subjects. A national certificate will record both vocational and academic qualifications.

GNVQs, the vocational qualifications which parallel A-level, will be renamed applied A-levels. Sir Ron is expected to argue that they should be set and tested externally. At present they are set and assessed by students' own teachers.

GNVQs do not have a syllabus but Sir Ron will suggest that the knowledge required for all courses should be specified because of criticisms that the content is too vague.

The report will argue that a small number of disaffected 14-year-olds should start attending further education college courses and work-based training while continuing to attend school. Sir Ron's thinking is in line with Labour Party policy published last week.

Sir Ron's proposals stop well short of a revolution. Students who wish to continue with three traditional A-levels will be able to do so. The report aims to end the impasse in education for 16- to 19-year-olds which has existed since 1988, when the Government turned down plans from the Higginson Committee for all students to take five A-levels. Teachers say the present A-level is too narrow.

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news

Breast cancer death rates falling

LIZ HUNT
Health Editor

Breast cancer death rates in Europe and North America are starting to fall and the effect is most marked for women under 50, according to new research. Scientists from the Imperial Cancer Research Fund say that in 16 out of 20 countries analysed, there was a levelling off or fall in the overall death rate in recent years after many decades of alarming rises. Increased awareness, earlier and better treatment, and changes in child-bearing patterns may be responsible, the scientists said.

Countries showing a downturn in deaths were generally those with the highest death rates, including the UK and Canada, while countries with the lowest rates, such as Poland and Spain, were those in which the number of deaths has been rising recently.

Carol Hermon and Valerie Beral, who work at the ICRF's Cancer Epidemiology Unit at Oxford University, analysed death rates from 1950 to 1992 in 20 countries in Europe, North America, Australia, and New Zealand. Their conclusions, published in the *British Journal of Cancer*, suggest that further falls are likely.

Ms Hermon said: "The decline is mainly among the generations of women born after 1920. We really do not know why these favourable trends have been happening, nor why the decline in mortality started in younger women."

The same team last year reported that breast cancer death rates were starting to fall in the UK. Wider use of the drug tamoxifen was thought to be a factor, rather than the NHS breast screening programme, which researchers said had not been in operation long enough to make a significant impact.

■ Women suffering regular pain and bleeding from endometriosis, a disorder of the womb lining, wait an average of seven years from first symptoms to diagnosis and treatment, a survey has found.

Party funding: Rags-to-riches millionaires replacing old money as main source of cash for depleted coffers



Nouveaux riches: Meadowhall developers Paul Sykes and Eddie Healey, and the retail magnate Graham Kirkham



Calling the shots: Robert Ogden, a businessman, who has held a fund-raising dinner

Tories aiming to tap Yorkshire's new rich

CHRIS BLACKHURST
Westminster Correspondent

Desperate to raise enough cash to fight the next general election, the Conservatives are turning towards an unlikely source of revenue: the self-made millionaires of unfashionable, unglamorous Yorkshire.

Party sources estimate a war chest of £1m has been built-up for the next election when it comes - and is being kept separate from other funds, over which the Royal Bank of Scotland, as holder of its £10m-plus overdraft, has first call.

In the past, the party has turned to international wheel-dealers, waving mighty cheque books. That, say party insiders, is still going on. But, much of the campaign fund for John Major's Tory party is also coming from this country's homegrown wealth.

Top of that list is Yorkshire's abundance of entrepreneurs, who began at the bottom and hauled themselves to the summit. All of them made their money under a Conservative government. They all know each other, live in style in state-of-the-art homes dotted around the Yorkshire countryside and are determined to bring the Tories victory at the next election.

They are also well known to Lord Harris, the discount car-

pet king, now the party's chief fund-raiser. Like him, they have backgrounds in retailing, mainly furniture, and property.

Accounts of Stadium City, the private company of Eddie Healey, joint developer, along with another multi-millionaire, Paul Sykes, of the giant Meadowhall shopping centre in Sheffield, reveal a donation to the party of £100,000.

Both Mr Healey, who made his first fortune from MPI, and Mr Sykes were guests at a fund-

'What's the use of being a millionaire in a socialist Britain?'

raising party held by Lord Harris at his home.

When Mr Major needed help, when the party's finances were in even more dire straits, he went to Yorkshire, to see Graham Kirkham, a multi-millionaire who made his money from the DFS discount furniture chain. Mr (now Sir Graham) Kirkham, a miner's son, handed over a cheque for £4m.

Another miner's son is Mr Sykes, who left school at 15, and, thanks to a series of brilliant business ventures, culminating in the hugely successful Meadowhall, is now worth £160m.

A die-hard Conservative, Mr

Sykes was once a councillor in his local Barnsley and donated a bomb-proof "battle bus" to Mrs Thatcher's general election campaign in 1987. He now sits on the powerful Conservative Yorkshire Area Council, responsible for 50 constituencies.

There is no danger of him deserting to New Labour and will do everything in his power to keep the Tories in charge. He will not say how much he gives personally but makes it plain he is happy to do so: "It used to be

wealth generation process would be harmed.

A close friend of Mr Sykes - they used to live together near Wetherby - is George Moore. Furniture retailing and property were the keys to Mr Moore's £100m fortune. Another friend of Mr Moore said he was "a big supporter of the Conservative party".

The Tories' approach to the land of Geoffrey Boycott and the bulldog spirit, is illustrated by a recent leaked letter from Robert Ogden, a multi-millionaire businessman, inviting like-minded friends to a fund-raising dinner at his home near Wetherby. As disclosed in the *Independent on Sunday*, Brian Mawhinney, the party chairman, asked Mr Ogden to hold the gathering. It would be "an occasion for prominent businessmen in our area to discuss the conduct of the campaign and to enlist their financial support".

Guest of honour at the dinner was Stephen Dorrell, the Secretary of State for Health.

Follower of Britain's wealthy, Dr Philip Beresford, said yesterday that the Tories' strategy was understandable. "These people are more appealing to the modern Tory party than the old, landowning class. They have ready cash, a dynamic 'can do' image and are wealth, and job, creators."

Blind actor to play Oedipus

JOHN MCKIE

It is one of the most celebrated roles in theatre. Gielgud and Olivier have played him, the character has spawned three films, an opera by Stravinsky, and new interpretations from Jean Cocteau, Peter Brook and Simon Callow.

And now, for what is thought to be the first time, an actor with a natural aptitude for the part, is playing him.

John Wilson Goddard is believed to be the first ever blind actor to play Oedipus who is blinded in Sophocles' Greek tragedy *Oedipus Rex*, in a major production when he appears in Jonathan Neale's new play *Oedipus Needs Help* next month.

Goddard, 45, is unsurprised that he seems to be the first blind actor to play the most famous character in Greek tragedy. "The onus is on casting directors, or anyone else, to find out how we work, and it's not something people are fully aware of. The number of disabled actors is very small, and is still growing."

After 10 years of acting, including TV appearances in *The*

Bill and One Foot in the Grave, Goddard asked Neale to write a part for him 18 months ago. The result is *Oedipus Needs Help*, which has a short spell at Brighton's Pavilion Theatre from 10 April, before opening at the Diorama Arts Centre, a new theatre in London's West End on Wednesday 17 April.

Goddard, who was an English teacher, a counsellor and a carpenter before he became an actor, asked Neale to write the play when he was short of work.

Neale, who has written 10 plays, hopes the first blind Oedipus will open doors for disabled actors. Oscar-winning performances of able-bodied actors Al Pacino and Daniel Day Lewis in disabled roles has drawn attention to the lack of roles being offered to disabled actors.

"I think it was a mistake not giving these roles to disabled actors," said Neale. "We are moving to a situation where black men are allowed to play all kinds of parts, and not just Othello. It's very rare that parts come up for disabled actors to do and I think they should get them."

Schoolgirl, 12, has baby boy

A schoolgirl from the Midlands has become Britain's youngest mother after giving birth to a baby boy just days after her twelfth birthday.

It is believed the girl gave birth in her home town of Wolverhampton in the West Midlands after becoming pregnant at the age of 11.

Reports suggested that the girl had given birth at Wolverhampton's New Cross Hospital, but a spokesman for the hospital insisted that it had no knowledge or records of the girl or her birth.

The baby's father, who is believed to be just 14, visited both mother and baby after the girl gave birth last month. The mother and her baby are said to be in good health.

The revelation comes just days after a 12-year-old girl gave birth to a baby in Swansea, South Wales.

News of the birth of the younger girl's child came to light after an unknown caller phoned the Blenheim Trust, an organisation which helps young girls in the Wolverhampton area, asking for help with a pregnant young girl.

explore what the gadget has to offer and is holding a seminar on the issue later this week.

The revision of the taste and decency section of the guidelines to programme makers is one of the last of the last acts of Marmaduke Hussey who retires as BBC chairman after 10 years next Sunday.

He took the lead after hearing the views of the 125 delegates at a seminar held by the BBC Board of Governors last November. They included religious leaders, writers, academics, broadcasters and representatives from bodies such as the Broadcasting Standards Council, the Broadcasting Complaints Commission and the National Viewers and Listeners' Association.

The move comes after the Government ruled out writing into the Broadcasting Bill the introduction of the V-chip, a device which allows parents to block out certain programmes. However, Virginia Bottomley, the Secretary of State for National Heritage, will continue to

good taste and decent behaviour and what is acceptable on television and radio, and their beliefs are changing very fast. The debate is important because we wield a powerful influence over what people see and hear."

In a letter to the delegates, written before the Dunblane massacre and the V-chip debate, Mr Hussey confirmed the new draft guidelines will be finalised by June. He said they will "emphasise the concept of respect as a key issue in determining where the boundaries should lie in issues of taste, sex and language", and added the guidelines would "stress the need for greater care to be taken about the use of bad language and especially religious language".

Since the guidelines were last amended three years ago, Radio 1 in particular has drawn a large number of complaints.

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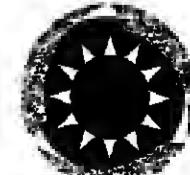
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BBC issues new taste rules

PAUL FIELD

Television viewers can expect less sex, violence, blasphemy and bad language under new BBC guidelines due to be announced in the summer.

Amid growing concern about standards of taste and decency, BBC governors are drawing up rules intended to ensure that the 9pm watershed is observed more vigorously.

Programme makers will be expected to examine the portrayal of violence and the use of stereotypes in comedy shows. The corporation also aims to give clearer guidance on scheduling on television and radio which could result in explicit sex scenes in drama such as *The Buddha of Suburbia* being shown late at night or excluded altogether. It will undoubtedly spell the end of four-letter words on *The Archers*.



Marmaduke Hussey: Final

explore what the gadget has to offer and is holding a seminar on the issue later this week.

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Peace forum: Glimmer of hope from political arm of IRA at its annual conference is marred by doubts over SDLP participation

Sinn Fein takes step towards elections

ALAN MURDOCH

Sinn Fein yesterday moved closer to participating in May elections for the proposed Northern Ireland forum, but doubts emerged as to whether the Social Democratic and Labour Party would join in after its deputy leader warned that Unionists may use the forum to delay all-party negotiations.

The Sinn Fein annual conference in Dublin approved an emergency motion from the party's executive giving the leadership the final say on whether to fight the elections.

Sinn Fein's President, Gerry Adams, said his personal preference was to boycott both the elections and the forum they will elect, but argued that "real

world" considerations might make this impractical.

Privately party leaders indicated that a boycott was only considered an option if this also became the policy of the other main nationalist party, the SDLP. Sinn Fein executive member Martin McGuinness said the party should discuss with the SDLP a joint policy of not participating in the elections or the body, which he described as "an embryonic Stormont assembly".

SDLP deputy leader, Seamus Mallon, underlined his party's reservations about the forum. He told Irish radio he was "seriously concerned" that Unionists might use it "as a bolt hole" from which to stall all-party talks when their negotiating tactics failed.

"What we have to date is some detail of the electoral process as announced by the Prime Minister. But there are other matters on which there is no definitive position as yet."

He added: "One of these is the transition from elections to negotiations and that is crucial. The second is the nature and role of this body."

His warning came in the wake of a ferocious attack on Irish nationalists by the Ulster Unionist leader, David Trimble. He told a weekend meeting of the Ulster Unionist Council that Irish premier, John Bruton, should "close down" the IRA.

If he failed to do this, Mr Trimble argued, John Major

should "end the common travel area between the Republic of Ireland and Britain. Control the

land and sea frontier", he urged.

He continued: "Once the Dublin government realises it can no longer export bombs along with its social problems to England, it will become as helpful as a 'Tory backbencher in search of a knighthood."

Delegates at the Sinn Fein conference voiced no demands for an early reinstatement of the IRA ceasefire. A senior party figure told the *Independent* the leadership was deeply concerned by what it sees as the Taoiseach's unwillingness to give strong support for nationalist aims.

He said it was also vital for Dublin to rebuild the powerful consensus linking Washington and Dublin with Northern Ireland nationalist parties, seen as crucial in opening the way to the 1994 IRA cessation.



Gerry Adams: Told conference yesterday he preferred a boycott, but acknowledged 'real world' considerations

Poli

mps get
all-clear
foreign
aid trips

Rank and file left in confusion over next move

STEPHEN GOODWIN

Two days of Delphic platitudes from the Sinn Fein ard ards did little to dispel what Gerry Adams, the party president, acknowledged was the "understandable confusion and apprehension" among the rank and file over the next steps.

Sinn Fein stood at a crossroads, all agreed. One road was war, and few speakers so much as alluded to this. Almost praying for the peace process to be put "back on the tracks", Marie Moore, from Belfast, said women would be looking at their husbands and sons and "what may be in front of them".

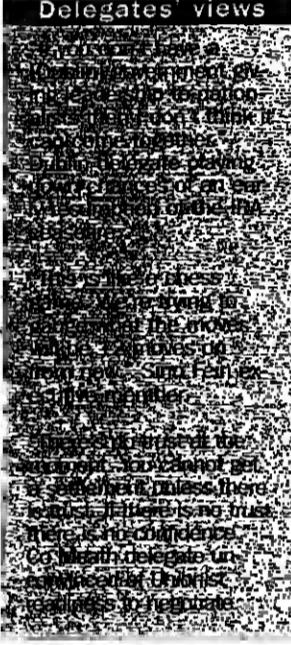
Most of the 800 or so delegates plainly preferred the political road but were angry at the barriers they believe John Major has placed across it. One after another, they declared Sinn Fein had "no fear of elections" but the party was "implacably opposed" to a Unionist-dominated assembly at Stormont.

Echoing the party president yesterday, Martin McGuinness, a leading Sinn Feiner, said: "Our preference is for non-participation in both the elections and the elected body." But he indicated that unless the nationalist Social Democratic and Labour Party agreed to a joint boycott of the elections, Sinn Fein was ready to participate.

Fra McCann, a councillor from the Lower Falls in Belfast, was cheered when he urged the leadership to make a decision as soon as possible so that the party could maximise its vote.

Paul Cassidy from Westport, Co Mayo, wanted the party to contest the 30 May election on an abstentionist ticket. "We need to be seen not to be afraid of seeking an electoral mandate," he said.

After a lengthy standing ovation, Mr Adams opened his



hour-long address by reminding delegates that they were in the very Rotunda hall where the Irish volunteers was founded in 1913. In 1905, the Rotunda saw the founding of Sinn Fein.

Mr Adams said it was a time for clear heads and steady nerves. "It is my firm conviction that we will get a peace settlement but I cannot say when this will happen or whether indeed it can happen under the present administrations."

He said Mr Major's "elective process" provided more evidence of his concern to stay in power and of the protracted effort to subvert a meaningful restoration of the peace process. "John Major has said that he will move on, and the peace process will move on, without Sinn Fein. John Major is kidding no one. John Major knows that the peace process is going nowhere without Sinn Fein."

Ex-minister attacked over vouchers scheme

JOHN RENTOUX
Political Correspondent

A former Conservative education minister was accused by Labour yesterday of seeking to profit from the Government's nursery school voucher scheme by setting up his own private nursery company.

Michael Fallon, who lost his Darlington seat at the last election, has set up a company to take advantage of the demand for new nursery places which will arise from the scheme - which he promoted as a minister. Stephen Byers, Labour's education spokesman, said: "The long-term interests of our children should be put before the short-term profits of Tory former education ministers."

Mr Fallon's company has built a £600,000 nursery for 80 children in Darlington, due to open in September, and has plans to build similar nurseries nation-wide. The pilot voucher scheme starts next week in three London boroughs and Norfolk, but the Government has accepted that there will not be enough places for all four-year-olds, whose parents will receive a voucher worth £1,100.

"It looks as though Mr Fallon could just be trying to do a favour for the Conservatives by at least attempting to provide places," said Mr Byers. "But it does raise questions of his in-

volvement in promoting the idea in government. And this is someone who has no experience of pre-school provision - he is motivated purely by need to make profit, rather than a desire to provide high quality education for four-year-olds."

Mr Fallon, who is seeking a Tory seat at the next election, said: "This nursery will be registered with Durham County Council. It will be inspected by them regularly, and we are planning an educational curriculum. This isn't just somewhere to drop them [children] off. This is preparing children to go on into primary school."



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Police chief gave evidence for gun dealer

STEVE BOGGAN
Chief Reporter

A senior police officer made a plea for leniency for a suspected gangland gun supplier even though detectives found 27 illegal held weapons, a silencer and 800 rounds of ammunition when they raided his home.

Commander John Allinson, former head of operations at Scotland Yard, retired after the incident, but full details of the dealer's armoury have

remained secret until now. Police correspondence obtained by the *Independent* shows that the 66-year-old man, who was also a Scotland Yard informer, was licensed by Sussex police to hold 12 shotguns, even though he had known links with criminals in London dating back at least 10 years.

Despite the find, Mr Allinson gave evidence in chambers to Judge Eric Winterton at Chichester Crown Court in November 1992. The man was fined £1,800 and avoided a custodial sentence. An inquiry into Mr Allinson's intervention found he had done nothing wrong.

killing in London in 1992, detectives found a huge cache of unregistered weapons and ammunition, including deadly solid slug bullets and at least one sawn-off shotgun.

Despite the find, Mr Allinson gave evidence in chambers to Judge Eric Winterton at Chichester Crown Court in November 1992. The man was fined £1,800 and avoided a custodial sentence. An inquiry into Mr Allinson's intervention found he had done nothing wrong.

Last night, Alun Michael, Labour's home affairs spokesman, said the incident was likely to result in fresh calls for tighter gun control. "I will be asking the Home Secretary to look into the matter. It seems extraordinary to me that, when one of the biggest problems facing us is the easy availability of illegal arms, a man like this can get a licence," he said.

Correspondence from Sussex police to Chichester Crown Court officials shows that when

Metropolitan Police officers raided the man's home in Worthing, West Sussex, they found 11 brand-named Greener, Harrington, Remington, Stevens, Rae and Acciaio shotguns, two Crosman rifles, a Smith and Wesson rifle, a Ruger revolver, an unbranded revolver, two Colt pistols, a low-powered saloon pistol and five other pistols. In addition, the judge ordered the confiscation of 800 rounds of ammunition, several spare gun barrels and a .22

sound moderator, or silencer. There were also the 12 licensed shotguns. Court records, which were withdrawn because the informant is understood to have been put under police protection, show that at least one of the shotguns had been "shortened" — or sawn off — contrary to the Firearms Act.

Last night, Mike George, technical editor of *Sporting Gun* magazine, said: "Normally, holding a sawn-off shotgun is enough to get someone a custodial sentence. And, if they have links with criminals, they aren't supposed to get a gun licence in the first place."

Sergeant Bill Ruddock of Sussex police confirmed that the man had been issued with a firearms certificate covering 12 shotguns. Despite one claim that the man had a conviction from the 1970s for possession of a firearm without a licence, Sgt Ruddock said the police national computer showed he had no criminal record before 1994.

MPs get all-clear on foreign paid trips

COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

MPs are to be allowed to take paid trips abroad financed by foreign governments or other organisations in spite of the attempts to tighten the rules on members' interests.

The members' interests committee is expected to give MPs the all-clear to take paid trips abroad in advice to MPs which it is issuing to clarify the new rules brought in the wake of the Nolan Committee's report on standards in public life.

There would have been a revolt among MPs, if the committee had barred them from taking such foreign trips.

The MPs will be advised that they can take part in debates on issues in the countries they visit, but they will be told not to initiate the debates. It will come as a relief to many MPs who take foreign trips as the guests of foreign countries, although many are sponsored by international corporations.

Some MPs have referred for-ign paid trips to the Parliamentary Commissioner on members' interests, Sir Gordon Downey, for advice on the code of conduct to follow, if they agree to such trips.

The commissioner was appointed as part of the attempts to end the public dispute about "sleaze" after allegations that some MPs accepted payments for tabling questions in the House of Commons.



Cut-price: Kit and the Widow, whose fee is reduced for *Salad Days*. Photograph: Rex

Stage is set for cheaper West End productions

MARIANNE MACDONALD
Arts Correspondent

The first plan to be put on under a radical new agreement to cut the cost of West End stage productions — including actors' salaries and theatre rents — will open next month.

Salad Days is being staged at the Vaudeville Theatre, one of nine London theatres with less than 700 seats which have signed up to the scheme in a bid to compete with blockbuster musicals such as *Miss Saigon* and *Cats*.

The move is also aimed at encouraging "angels" — theatre investors — to put money into productions which until now have cost at least £200,000, and up to £2m or more at the top end.

The Small London Theatres Agreement, brainchild of the Society of London Theatres, cuts costs across the board. Actors who push up costs with salaries of £3,000 or more a week will have their earnings capped at £1,500 a week, with no share of box office royalties.

Equally, the theatres involved have pledged to halve the rents they charge to producers mounting shows in an attempt to create a replica of New York's off-Broadway in the West End.

The nine theatres involved are the Vaudeville, Ambassadors, Criterion, Duchess, Duke of York's, Fortune, Garrick, St Martin's and Whitehall.

Ticket prices will be capped at £20, with standby tickets on offer at £12. Attempts will also be made to persuade ticket

agencies to cut the commission of up to £2.50 charged on ticket sales.

If everyone can agree to a cut of their slice of the cake, the idea is that a production has a better chance of getting on its feet and moving into profit, and that more productions are put on in the first place.

Edward Snape, the 30-year-old producer of *Salad Days*, said although the agreement was particularly aimed at helping stage new plays, in other ways the 1950s musical fitted the bill perfectly.

He has negotiated a royalty pool, which means that Ned Sherrin, the director, as well as the choreographer, designer and musical director, the Widow, not to mention Mr Snape himself, are on reduced salaries. The show opens on 18 April.

The idea of the agreement is to make London theatre more commercial, to encourage more theatre investors to come on board," Mr Snape said. "This means they have a better chance of making profit — at the moment I think it's one in eight for West End productions. Very often investors lose everything."

Rupert Rhymes, chief executive of the Society of London Theatres, said the scheme would benefit young producers, who often find it difficult to raise the £200,000 needed to stage a new West End show.

"Everybody can cut back in order to make the project work, although it's still going to be the case that if a star wants something, they're not going to be persuaded to take the minimum," he said.



The Vaudeville: One of nine theatres in scheme



Ned Sherrin: Director gets reduced share of receipts.

Bazza

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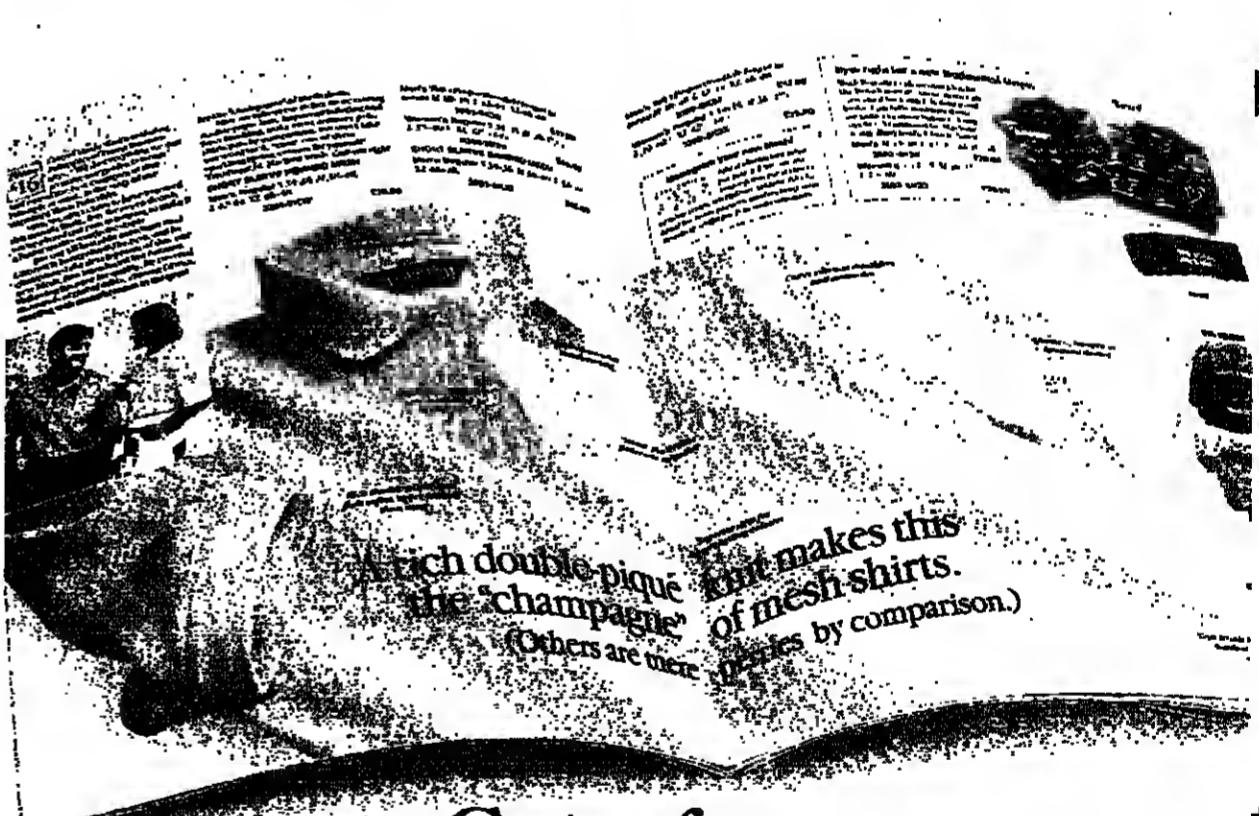
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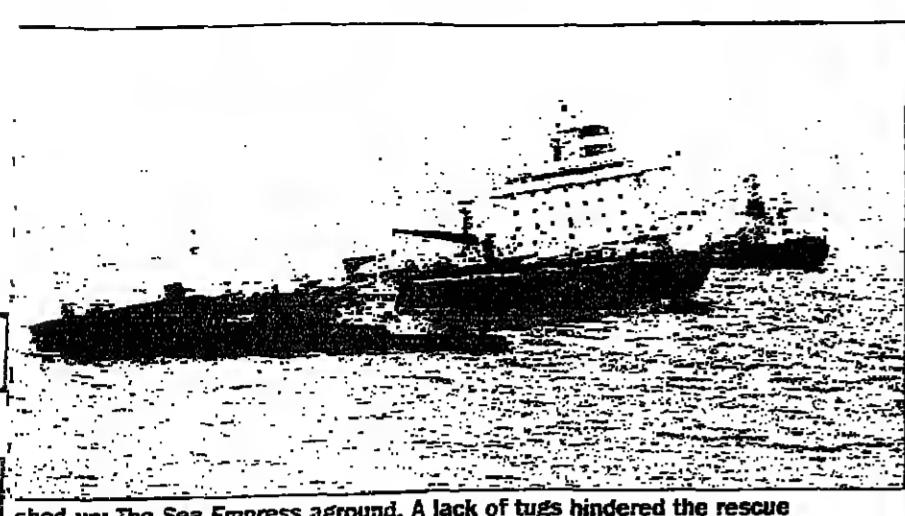
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news

Sea Empress' oil disaster: Environmentalists fear vital issues will be ignored by investigation



shed up: The Sea Empress aground. A lack of tugs hindered the rescue

Terms of spill inquiry upset nature groups

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR
Sport Correspondent

A dispute has broken out between the Government and environmental groups over the inquiry into last month's Sea Empress oil spill.

Ten groups, including the Red Tide Fund for Nature and the Council for British Archaeology, wrote to David Trim, the official carrying out the inquiry for the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

The groups also want a wider inquiry that can consider issues of national implications, which are outside the remit of MAIB inquiry. In the letter, Dr Puffin said the MAIB inquiry had been widened in a Commons statement by Sir George Young, Secretary of State for Transport, on 22 February, a spokesman for the department said. The Donaldson inquiry was as relevant to this incident as to the *Braer* and a wider inquiry would therefore duplicate much of his work.

Other things that concern the groups include provision of pilotage services across Britain and the lack of "full environmental liability in shipping disasters". The groups would like shipping insurers to pay for the whole clean-up and subsequent monitoring.

The results of the inquiry into the grounding of the *Berga* in the same area shortly before the Sea Empress spill are expected in the next few weeks and the environmentalists want to ensure its findings are taken into account. The *Berga* was double-hulled and no oil was lost.

The groups are also worried

only £250,000 has been provided by the Welsh Office to check

the effects of the initial spill and the use of dispersants. They do not feel it will be enough for

long-term monitoring. They say

salvage tugs in the south-western approaches to Britain. The lack of salvage capacity hindered the rescue. The environmentalists want to ensure the inquiry re-examines provision of tugs, because, while Donaldson raised the issue of a possible shortage of salvors, no action has been taken since publication of his report in May 1994.

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monitoring should include not only bays and coasts near the disaster, but also Lundy island, north Devon and the open sea.

As well as things like checking the population of seabirds and seals, the programme required more complex operations such as taking shellfish out regularly to check contamination and the monitoring of small sites which are not being cleaned as a way of checking how nature rejuvenates itself.

The terms of the MAIB inquiry had been widened in a Commons statement by Sir George Young, Secretary of State for Transport, on 22 February, a spokesman for the department said. The Donaldson inquiry was as relevant to this incident as to the *Braer* and a wider inquiry would therefore duplicate much of his work.

But the groups are not satisfied. A WWF spokeswoman said: "There has been a major ecological disaster and no effort can be spared in trying to ensure it doesn't happen again.

The MAIB only has a very limited scope and we need an inquiry that is able to consider both national and international ramifications."

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Illegal 'sport': Raids reveal 150-year-old ban ignored among close-knit communities

Secret network defies ban on cockfighting

WILL BENNETT

Every week in Britain and Ireland small groups of men, linked by a highly secretive network, gather to pit their fighting cocks in a battle to the death, sometimes waging thousands of pounds on the result.

The 'sport' was banned in this country in 1849 but a reminder of the network survives came last week when a court rejected the appeals of two men against prison sentences imposed for cockfighting offences. John Lee, 48, of Belvedere, Kent, is now serving three months and Mark Giles, 31, of Billingshurst, West Sussex, one month.

Together with 12 other men

'Normally, the loser would flee, but here there is no escape'

and a 16-year-old youth, they were caught when 40 police and officers from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals raided a cockfight in a caravan park at Belvedere last year.

Those not jailed were fined up to £400, except for the youth who received a conditional discharge.

The case, only the fifth prosecution in the 147 years since cockfighting was made illegal, was a rare victory for the RSPCA. Another case is pending, resulting from a raid in the former mining community of Kelso, Co Durham.

Prosecutions are hard to bring because, unlike dogfighting which is the pastime of natural braggarts many of whom are known criminals, cockfighting takes place in Britain's most tightly knit communities. For some travelling families it

is a tradition going back generations, while more recently Asians have become involved.

Farmers and the few professional people who take part, believed to include doctors and lawyers, are also experts at concealing their activities. None of the usual sources such as underworld informers are any use, as it takes a long time to be accepted as part of the fraternity and many of the fights are held in remote rural areas.

The RSPCA is not revealing what led it to raid the fight in Belvedere. Chief Inspector Mike Butcher of its special operations unit, said: "Information came to our notice and we started a protracted inquiry. What happens is that every so often a piece of information comes in that makes the jigsaw complete."

Of the 14 men convicted in the recent prosecution, 10 came from Kent, 2 from Sussex, 1 from Rotherham, South Yorkshire and 1 from Scunthorpe, Humberside. Most were between 30 and 55 and were from traditional gypsy families. Cockfighting rings are also known to exist in the West Country, East Anglia and Hertfordshire.

Cocks fight both because of their strong territorial instinct and because handlers goad them before placing them in the pit. Normally the loser would flee but in the ring there is no escape and the victor, believing its rival is still a threat, kills it.

The birds — from traditional fighting breeds such as the old English game or newer imported Asian breeds such as the azil and the shamo — either fight with their natural spurs sharpened or with three-inch metal spikes attached to their legs and the contests can last up to 20 minutes. It is an activity which even in the 19th century was regarded as barbarous, yet there are hundreds of people in Britain who still regard it as an enjoyable way to spend a day.



In the ring: Illegal since 1849, cockfights are still held every week. Photograph: Rex Features

Labour targets rapists in law and order plans

JASON BENNETT
Crime Correspondent

Rapists would be more likely to be convicted and sex offenders face tough new jail sentences under proposals published by Labour today.

The judiciary would also be given a new role in setting minimum jail terms for all offenders and the public would be given more information about how long criminals have to stay in prison.

The package of measures, *Honesty, Consistency and Progression in Sentencing*, which was drawn up by Jack Straw, Labour's home affairs spokesman, will be discussed this week at the party's home affairs committee. It is expected to form a central plank in Labour's law-and-order election strategy.

The report deliberately clashes with the White Paper on sentencing from Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, which will be published on Thursday and proposes tough new measures against drug dealers and sex offenders.

Jack Straw said yesterday: "In the last 18 months we have often used the word crisis to

describe the current state of the criminal justice system. It is not too strong a word."

"This paper outlines a series of proposals which could provide for greater consistency, progression and honesty in sentencing and offer more protection for the public against very serious offences."

On minimum sentences, Mr Straw proposes to allow the Court of Appeal, after consultation with various groups, to set guidelines for all main categories of offences. The court can already lay down judgments on such issues as rape, incest and drug trafficking.

The new system contrasts

sharply with the Government's

proposals which have caused an outcry among the judiciary who

were told they are having their

powers of discretion removed.

The forthcoming White Paper

proposes a three-year mini-

mum sentence for persistent

burglars, six years for drug

dealers on their second or

third offence, and life for repeat rapists.

Other measures are to give

courts more detailed information

about previous convictions and

to give judges and magistrates

more feedback about the effects

of their sentencing decisions.

Directors attack schools

Company directors have made a strong attack on "mistaken egalitarian policies" which they claim have lowered educational standards.

The Institute of Directors said decades of the policies had produced a generation of unemployed graduates and school leavers who could not read, write or cope with basic maths.

They were the result of the belief that it was unfair for the cleverest to succeed of trendy teaching methods and of exams

so easy that no one could fail.

In a report based on a survey

of members, the institute

condemned politicians of all parties

for turning a "politically correct"

blind eye while academic standards fell. It called for the clock to be turned back — to revive grammar schools, written exams, emphasis on the three Rs and elite higher education — before Britain fell irrecoverably behind its economic competitors.

The IoD's complaint drew a

furious response from teachers'

leaders. Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers, attacked "hoardroom fat cats" who have taken profits from the same tax cuts that have starved schools of money".

He said that the changes in

courses which employers were

now condemning — more practical skills and less formal academic education — were exactly

what they had demanded 20 years ago.

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"Our customers expect us to take a lead - and we have. We believe they can eat at McDonald's with confidence. We continue to have complete faith in the quality and safety of the food we sell in our restaurants. Our hamburgers only contain prime cuts of beef in which BSE has never been detected. We never have and never will use offal or mechanically recovered meat. The controls operated at all stages of our beef production have always been among the toughest in the food industry."

We believe that British beef is safe. However, we cannot ignore the fact that recent announcements have led to a growing loss of consumer confidence in British beef which has not been restored. We have always put our customers first. They trust us to provide high quality, safe food. We believe that they want us to take this action in the circumstances.

We remain committed to Britain and the British food industry. In 1995 we sourced over £240 million worth of food from British suppliers.

Our customers always have been and always will be our first concern."

However, from Thursday 28th March we will be selling hamburgers, Big Macs and quarterpounders now made exclusively from non-British beef.

Meanwhile, all our restaurants will remain open, serving chicken and fish products and of course, fries, drinks and breakfast.

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Peking's foe triumphs in Taiwan poll

TERESA POOLE

Taipei

China's leaders may be forced to reassess their strategy towards Taiwan following President Lee Teng-hui's sweeping victory in the island's first democratic presidential election. A key indication of whether tensions will ease could come over the next few weeks with a decision by Peking to halt its threatening military exercises.

Mr Lee, the candidate of the ruling Kuomintang (KMT) party, won 54 per cent of the vote on Saturday, higher than predicted. Many analysts in Taipei believe China's belligerent tactics, aimed at reducing Mr Lee's vote, added as much as 10 per cent to his tally. The pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party's candidate, Dr Peng Ming-min, came second with 21 per cent.

Jean-Pierre Cabestan, director of the French Research Centre on Contemporary China, in Taipei, said: "Seventy-five per cent of people who voted refused not only reunification with China in the near future, but also refused to give in to China." Mr Lee has described reunification as an "ultimate goal", but not until the mainland becomes democratic. Ever since his trip to the United States last June, Peking has accused Mr Lee of secretly working for Taiwan's independence.

The most pro-reunification candidate in the election, Lin Yang-kang, won only 15 per cent. Voter turnout was high at 76 per cent.

Mr Lee publicly set himself a target of winning more than 50 per cent in order to strengthen his hand against Peking.

China's missile tests and military exercises in the seas near Taiwan not only helped Mr Lee win votes, but also prompted the United States to send two aircraft carriers into the region.



Warning signal: The US aircraft carrier *Nimitz* heading towards the South China Sea. The US has to decide this week whether it will enter the Taiwan Strait. Photograph: AFP

The confrontation focused world attention on Taiwan's emergence as a democratic state. Andrew Yang, secretary general of the Chinese Council of Advanced Policy Studies in Taipei, said: "The [election] result has humiliated the Chinese government. The ball is in the Chinese court now."

The Chinese army, navy and aircraft exercises in the Taiwan Strait is due to finish today. Before the election, there were reports that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) planned further military drills. One test of whether there has been a reassessment of policy will be whether any new exercises are announced.

Peking's initial reaction to the election results was to claim that in spite of Mr Lee's landslide victory, China had "dealt a heavy blow to the Taiwan independence and separatist forces".

Only hours earlier, China had been accusing Mr Lee of pushing Taiwan into an "abyss of misery" with his pro-independence stance. He told a reception for overseas Taiwanese. However, the Prime Minister, Lien Chan, repeated recent comments that Taiwan was "interested in thinking seriously" about a peace agreement with the mainland.

Bolstered by his popular mandate, Mr Lee will press for a dialogue between Taipei and Peking to resume. Dr Cabestan said: "I think President Lee is

in a more comfortable position now. He may be tempted to take a few initiatives, to show his benevolence towards mainland China." Government officials point to possible concessions on air and postal links with the mainland, which Peking badly wants.

The Chinese President, Jiang Zemin, will have to decide how much room he has for manoeuvre. The failure of Peking's tactics has increased the pressure on Mr Jiang, whose leadership credentials for the post-Deng Xiaoping era are being tested by the Taiwan issue.

A year ago, Mr Jiang took the initiative over Taiwan by announcing an "Eight-Point Plan" for eventual reunification. The Chinese military, whose support would be crucial in a leadership battle, denounced the plan as a conciliatory. Mr Jiang swiftly changed tack. For the past 10 months, China's generals have driven a hardline strategy of military intimidation and threats to use force if Taiwan declares independence.

The question now is who controls Peking's Taiwan policy in the wake of the election. Mr Jiang has been silent recently as the crisis unfolded. Yves Nallet, a Sinologist at China News Analysis, said: "Is President Jiang going to speak now, or not? If he speaks, it could prove that he is still in

charge of policy. If he does not speak, it means that probably he is a split, or the hardliners are in control."

The role of the US in the crisis will be crucial. Peking was surprised by the strength of the US reaction to China's sabre-rattling. This week, Washington will have to decide whether the US carrier, *Nimitz*, will pass through the Taiwan Strait. China's Prime Minister, Li Peng, last week warned a show of force in the Strait would make the situation "all the more complicated". The US has not said what route the *Nimitz* will take.

Analysts fear an aggressive stance will play into the hands of Peking's hardliners.

Sydney's 'serial killer' on trial

Sydney (Reuters) — An Australian court will begin selecting a jury amid tight security today for the trial of a Sydney roadworker accused of committing the country's most notorious serial killings.

Ivan Milat, 51, is charged with the murder of seven young backpackers, including two British and three German tourists, whose mutilated remains were found buried in a forest 60 miles south-west Sydney between September 1992 and late 1993.

All the victims were reportedly stabbed or shot in the head and their bodies dumped in the Belanglo State Forest. Their murders shocked the nation and sparked a massive police investigation that led to Milat's arrest in May 1994.

A court source said tight security would be in place for the trial and metal scanners would be used at public entrances.

Mr Milat has pleaded not guilty to murdering Joani Walters and her British friend Caroline Clarke, both 20; German Simone Schmidt, 20; German Neugebauer, 21; and Australian James Gibson and his girlfriend Deborah Everest, both 19.

He also denies kidnapping English hitchhiker who told preliminary hearing in late 1994 that Mr Milat drove him to the edge of the Belanglo forest in 1990 and held him at gunpoint before he escaped.

The Englishman, who cannot be identified, is the prosecution's star witness. No witness to the murders has been found.

The trial is expected to be of Australia's longest murder hearings and will begin with the task of choosing a jury able to devote six months to the case.

Turkey offers olive branch to end Aegean clash with Greece

HUGH POPE

Istanbul

Turkey's new centre-right government yesterday offered to make a fresh start in relations with Greece with talks on all aspects of the two rivals' disputes in the Aegean Sea.

With an eye on Greece's threat to veto European financial aid, the Prime Minister, Mesut Yilmaz, offered dialogue without preconditions.

"Turkey and Greece must overcome their hostility ... this vicious circle must be broken," Mr Yilmaz said, in the Turkish capital, Ankara. "Our goal is to end all problems with Greece."

Turkey and Greece almost went to war in January over a pair of barren, rocky outcrops

in the Aegean Sea known as Kardak to the Turks and Imia to the Greeks. The American trouble-shooter Richard Holbrooke talked the two Nato allies into standing down, but warships from both countries still prowl the area.

Turkish-Greek distrust was highlighted last week when a dispute arose over who should feed the goats on the islets. The two sides reportedly agreed to take it in turns to ship in fodder.

"We can't take the issue of the Kardak rocks on their own. It's the result of many problems piled up over the years," Mr Yilmaz said.

Turks and Greeks have been uneasy and often warring neighbours for nearly a millennium. Points of friction include

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International

California day-dreaming for weary Dole

CORNWELL
Angeles

weary Kansan has been go through the motions for the primary, now dubbed "vainous Tuesday". Senator Dole capped three days of dazing with a trip to San Quin prison, home to the "only gas chamber, to demand faster executions. Here's one thing the American people understand: that it's gotten out of hand." And, accusing Bill Clinton of king efforts to shorten the row appeals and putting hearted judges on the

THE US
PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTIONS '96

bench. "We are not punishing the criminals, we punish the victim's families."

Touching all the usual bases - a visit to the B-2 bomber factory to talk tough on defence, the obligatory jaunt to the San Diego border to harangue illegal immigrants - Mr Dole made Mr Clinton his chief opponent in tomorrow's vote. He steadily

fastly ignored his theoretical rival, Pat Buchanan. But if the opening shots of the national campaign are being fired in California, Mr Clinton's prospects of re-election have seldom looked so good.

Mr Dole has struggled to

make an impact in a state where his grey personality seems out of tune with West Coast culture. California moved its primary forward by two months to try to give it a serious voice in picking the Republican candidate.

But Mr Dole on almost any count already has enough delegates to secure the nomination, and seems certain yet again to

clobber Mr Buchanan, who, unable to afford a plane, has paraded nosily around California in a bus. But his talk of a battle for the heart and soul of the Republican Party is falling flatter by the day, with polls giving him less than 20 per cent.

A record low turn-out is expected. Even minor local races have generated more excitement than what one columnist called the "yawning meaninglessness" of the primary campaign. Tomorrow's ballot will test how District Attorney Gil Garcetti, blamed for blunders in the prosecution of OJ Simpson, fares against five chal-

engers. There are the added distractions of Proposition 197, which would bring back cougar hunting after two fatal attacks on joggers. And the "terrible 200s", a series of propositions to limit attorneys' fees in civil lawsuits, have seen wealthy trial lawyers fighting to hold on to their livelihood.

For Mr Dole, California presents a quandary: it has 54 of the electoral-college votes in November, and Mr Clinton would almost certainly lose the White House without it. President George Bush is thought to have made a fatal mistake when he ignored the state in his re-elec-

tion effort in 1992. On the other hand, Mr Clinton has been constantly solicitous about California's concerns, visiting the state a record 23 times and sparing Chardonnay with Barbara Streisand and other members of Hollywood's élite.

Mr Dole might be well advised to cede it to the Democrats and concentrate his energies elsewhere. Immigration is still a raw issue for Californians, who last year voted by a solid majority for Proposition 187, a plan to bar schools and public medicine to illegal immigrants. But Mr Clinton, with much fanfare, has already dou-

bled the numbers of the Border Patrol and stepped up immigration controls at airports. Mr Dole has flirted with the idea of naming the state's Attorney-General, Dan Lundgren, as his vice-presidential nominee, but even locally General Colin Powell is the only popular choice.

"I understand the dangers of an uncertain world," he said. "Maybe President Clinton doesn't." But California's rebounding economy, led by a hi-tech and entertainment boom, has begun to replace lost defence jobs. No one on the production line seemed to take the promise of the Senate Majority Leader, the consummate politician, very seriously.

Ghetto boy makes good for US blacks

LOCAL HEROES : 9

In his life story, if his life story had been submitted as a work of fiction, it would have been read as preposterous. After all, black gang members in inner-gangster do not have road-maps experiences on the corners that transform lives. And just supposing did, he would become a social worker, perhaps a church minister. He certainly would not Congress, and turn into one of the most skillful and heaviest figures on Capitol Hill - only to abandon that most rising career to take charge of a venerable but deeply

This is epic stuff, and small wonder that three weeks ago Mr Mfume's first trip to Chicago and the Midwest as head of the NAACP, ostensibly to attend a tribute of the National Rainbow Coalition to its founder Jesse Jackson, turned into a celebration of his own appointment. "Go tell it on the mountain that the NAACP is back," Mr Mfume said. "We met the enemy one day and it was us, and in finding ourselves, we found our future."

Not before time. Founded after an Illinois race riot in 1909, the NAACP is the oldest and largest of America's mainstream civil rights organisations. But in recent years it has lost its way. At his swearing-in ceremony last month which President Bill Clinton attended, Mr Mfume promised that change at the NAACP would be "swift, focused and constructive". He has kept his word, in a fashion which his admirers perhaps did not expect - sacking one-third of staff of the organisation's full-time staff after a fortnight on the job. Having defied logic in rescuing his own life, his supporters say, surely he can do the same with the NAACP - and maybe with black America as well.

Rupert Cornwell



Don't cry for her: A tank rumbling past portraits of Evita and Juan Peron in Budapest during filming of the controversial movie epic starring Madonna

Evita has Hungary reliving 1956 revolt

ADRIAN BRIDGE
Budapest

Almost 40 years after Russian tanks rolled through Budapest to crush the 1956 uprising, the Americans yesterday made a belated response to kind.

As angry protesters gathered on a square close to parliament, two vintage US Sherman tanks stormed in to disperse them.

But unlike the events of October 1956, this was make-believe: the opening shots of what is going to be more than a month of filming for a controversial production of *Evita*, starring Madonna in the leading role.

The makers of the film, which is based on the musical by Andrew Lloyd Webber about the life of Eva Peron, had gone to great lengths to recreate the feel of Buenos Aires in the 1950s. Imitation palm trees, Argentinian flags and large posters of Eva and her husband, General Juan Peron, adorned the square where this weekend's crowd scenes were filmed. The red star on a monument commemorating the city's liberation from the Nazis by the Soviet army in 1945 had been discreetly concealed.

The filming of *Evita* began earlier this year in Argentina but was disrupted by protests over the casting of Madonna in the title role. Many Argentines still revere Eva Peron, and felt the pop star would desecrate her memory.

The Argentine President, Carlos Menem, declared Madonna was unsuitable for the role and described the musical as "a libellous interpretation of Eva's life".

Hungarians welcome the filming as a source of extra revenue and something that raises the profile of their capital city. But bemused onlookers hoping to catch a glimpse of Madonna were disappointed. She is not due to arrive until tomorrow.

IN BRIEF

Kabul shelling kills 18

Kabul - Rebels shelled the Afghan capital yesterday, killing 18 civilians and wounding 14 in a busy shopping street, witnesses said. One shell crashed into the Shahr-i-Nau district in central Kabul, killing six shoppers instantly. Twelve others died in hospital. It was part of a salvo that hit the city as frontline fighting between forces loyal to President Burhanuddin Rabbani and the Taliban Islamic militia intensified.

Reuter

A facelift for the greenback

Washington - The new American \$100 note, given a facelift to make counterfeiting harder, will enter circulation this week. The US Federal Reserve will today start shipping to banks the new notes, which will still carry the face of Benjamin Franklin but with a larger portrait shifted off centre. By today, \$50 million new \$100 notes will have been printed.

Reuter

Hillary and Chelsea start European tour

Ramstein - The US first lady, Hillary Rodham Clinton (right) arrived yesterday in Germany on a 10-day trip to Europe. Her visit, a mix of politics and tourism, also includes stops in Italy, Turkey and Greece. Mrs Clinton is due to fly today to Tuzla, where US troops in Bosnia are based. Mrs Clinton was joined by her daughter Chelsea, 16, who is on spring break.



AP

Iraqi voters face limited choice

Raqqa - Iraq yesterday held its first parliamentary elections since 1989. All 689 candidates were approved by the government. Officials estimated that 90 per cent of Iraq's 8 million registered voters would vote.

AP

Kashmir avalanche leaves 36 dead

Muzaffarabad - An avalanche has killed 36 people and injured 27 in a remote village in the Pakistan-ruled part of the disputed Kashmir region. The avalanche, the second in nine days, swept away 27 houses and a mosque before dawn on Saturday. Helicopters were sent to the area yesterday with relief supplies.

AP

Benin's former ruler makes a comeback

Cotonou - Benin's constitutional court yesterday named ex-dictator Mathieu Kerekou the winner of last week's presidential election. It said he won 52.49 per cent of the vote, while the incumbent President Nicopole Soglo received 47.51 per cent. Kerekou came to power in a 1972 coup, and declared the country a Marxist-Leninist state. He was forced to relinquish power in 1990 after a popular revolt.

AP

Britain joins South China Sea exercises

Singapore - Aircraft and warships staged exercises off Malaysia and Singapore yesterday as part of the Five Power Defense Arrangement, which links Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia and Singapore. The 1971 pact came about after Britain withdrew its forces from Singapore and Malaysia. The units taking part include a Royal Navy destroyer.

AP

Finns behaving badly

Aboard the S/S Scandinavia - Drinkers on this Baltic ferry claimed two new records in their second Finnish beer-drinking championships. An engineer, Matti Puustinen, 21, downed eight bottles of beer in 1 min 10.36 seconds and a student, Risto Saikko, 34, took the title in the Small Tankard event with a new record of 1.61 seconds.

Reuter

This week in



From today, Section Two has a completely new look, with more pages, new features, a daily radio column and an expanded listings section providing Britain's most comprehensive daily guide to going out.

on Monday

A new section focusing on Family Life, beginning with an investigation into how children's television is threatening the family unit. In the centre pages, each week we challenge the personalities and institutions that have become icons of Nineties life. On Monday, we ask: Do we need Start the Week? Plus: In the second part of our series on the making of the modern girl, we examine teenage attitudes to sex.

on Tuesday

Part three of the making of the modern girl: how the Nineties generation gets what it wants. Plus: Health - a new treatment for chronic fatigue.

on

Theatre, midweek travel section, your money, finance and law. Plus - Final part of the making of the modern girl: what the future holds for the teenager of the Nineties.

on Thursday

All our regular features, including Dilemmas, John Walsh's column, plus film, education and graduate

24Seven - a brand new 20-page pull-out-and-keep entertainment and listings section. Including a complete day-by-day planner for the week ahead, plus

relationships and marriage.

and in Sport

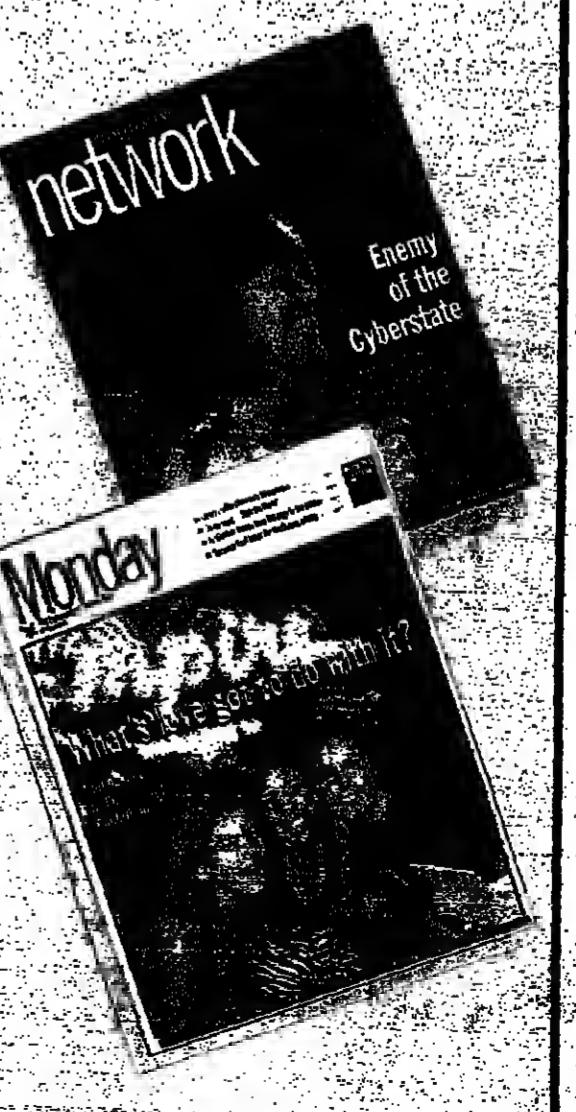
A 24-page section with all the action from a big weekend of sport. Plus: Part one of a major investigation into the crisis afflicting English cricket. Where does our summer game go from here? And the Monday interview with Alan Shearer, the striker who doesn't mind not scoring goals for England.

Also on Tuesday, fashion, architecture, visual arts and media. Our new back pages section introduces a weekly feature on the history of popular culture.

In our back pages, Martin Newell, Britain's leading rock poet, and Neil Kerber, one of the country's funniest cartoonists, present their views of the modern world.

plus. In the back pages, William Hartston's history of the world in 10 1/2 inches

seven-day TV, radio and satellite listings, ticket offers and informed comment on the week's highlights



French struggle to stem the tide of disillusion

The parties' public debates on the EU have only exposed bitter divisions, writes Mary Dejevsky

Paris — As France makes its final preparations for the Inter-Governmental Conference that opens in Turin at the weekend, its political classes are exhibiting a very un-French sentiment: angst. There is angst about the course of the conference and its outcome; angst about the state and response of French public opinion.

The uncertainties about Europe have been evident, at least since France delivered a "petit oui" to the Maastricht treaty in a 1992 referendum. But it is only now, with the approach of the IGC, that politicians have recognised the real risk of French alienation from Europe and scrambled to do something about it.

The past two weeks have witnessed a positive orgy of "consultation" and "debate" in all political parties in an overdue attempt by politicians to discover what their rank and file activists think about Europe and to find a few good ideas around which a national consensus can be built.

The Socialists held a whole day of discussion in Paris, where they invited the Communists, Greens and Radicals to come along in an attempt to form a broad consensus on the left.

The loose centre-right pro-European grouping, the UDF, took elected officials nationwide to a restored abbey 90 minutes from Paris for a day's contemplation, while the Gaullists convened their "national council" in Paris on Saturday for a day of fraught discussion, saved only by the absence of the Euro-sceptic, Philippe Séguin.

BUILDING EUROPE

mental questions Britain has wrangled with since the start of its involvement with Europe.

For while the questions posed by the organisers of each gathering were quite different, the content of the discussions was almost identical. Where should the EU stop and the nation state begin? How much, if any, sovereignty or national identity would France be prepared to give up to achieve political union? What implications has EU membership had, or could it have, for jobs, agriculture, and the French lifestyle, including its public services?

The Socialists parted happily, content to have got all the left around one table, but without the barest outline of a political

platform beyond a recognition that Europe was "a good thing" and should create more jobs. Jacques Delors was cheered when he silenced a Socialist Euro-sceptic by saying: "If the piano that is Europe is not working, shoot the pianist, not the piano."

The UDF re-nailed its colours to Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's European mast, and spoke of the need to sell Europe more actively to French voters. The Gaullists had a slanging match, with every reference to the nation state applauded and an onslaught on the single currency from Charles Pasqua, the former interior minister.

The former prime minister, Edouard Balladur, defended Europe, arguing that unemployment would be worse without Europe. There was a speech from the Prime Minister, Alain Juppé, who swiped back at Mr Balladur that if he wanted US-style tax levels, he would get a US-style welfare state.

Mr Juppé's prepared text had set out known aspects of France's negotiating position at Turin, such as a figurehead for a common foreign and security policy and a bigger role for national parliaments. The speech he gave, however, mentioned none of this, promising a "French initiative" at Turin to be presented by Mr Chirac, and outlining a "social programme" for Europe. This social programme, details of which have not been released, may be the French President's attempt to reconcile the French with Europe but Saturday seemed to be the first time his Prime Minister had heard of it.



Shattered dream: A young immigrant sleeping in the Paris gym shortly before the police raided the building at dawn

Photograph: AFP

French storm over evicted Africans

MARY DEJEVSKY

Paris

French government, police and Catholic leaders found themselves at the centre of a row yesterday, following the eviction by force of 300 African immigrants from a gymnasium in central Paris where they had sought refuge. The group, some of whom have lived in France for more than 10 years, have no residence papers and are demanding the right to stay.

After the outcry caused by Friday's eviction, and its only partial effectiveness, yesterday's operation was personally overseen by Philippe Masson, the Paris police chief who was responsible for the anti-terrorist measures in the French capital last summer and autumn.

What initially seemed a straightforward action against illegal immigrants, of the sort pledged by the government of President Jacques Chirac when he became President, has given rise to a controversy.

The first to become embroiled were Church leaders, after it became known that the priest at St Amroise had requested the first eviction order "on grounds of sanitation and health", and that he had had the support of the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris, Jean-Marie Lustiger.

Mr Lustiger had visited the Africans only a day before their

eviction and had reportedly expressed his support for their cause.

The second to face criticism were the police, for the heavy-handedness of the first operation, its limited success and its dubious legality.

Local magistrates who questioned the legal basis of the eviction warrant yesterday freed 40 members of the group in custody pending deportation.

The magistrates found the police had acted illegally by mounting their operation in the church before 6am.

The row has extended now to the government, with the Prime Minister, Alain Juppé, being accused by the veteran Paris campaigner for the homeless, Abbé Pierre, of acting in bad faith. The abbé has been involved in the Africans' case since the start of the protest.

He said Mr Juppé had given him an undertaking that there would be no action by the police against the group after the eviction from St Amroise.

After yesterday's police operation against the gymnasium, the cleric said that either Mr Juppé had not kept his word, or that he did not know what his ministers were doing, "in which case he lacks authority and should go".



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Belarus patriots assail union with Russia

PHIL REEVES
Moscow

Thousands marched through Minsk in Belarus yesterday to protest against plans for a new pact with Russia, which many see as a step towards the end of the country's independence.

Angry marchers surrounded the state television station, whose output is tightly controlled, and demanded air time for opposition politicians. The demonstrators left at the urging of police, but riot police later beat groups of protesters outside the headquarters of the security service, which is still known as the KGB.

The demonstration was originally called to mark the founding of the Belarussian People's Republic in 1918, which only survived nine months before the country was carved up between Poland and Soviet Russia.



But the purpose of the rally changed after Saturday's announcement in Moscow of a new "union" between Belarus and Russia. The declaration was made by the Belarussian President, Alexander Lukashenko, with the Russian Prime Minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, standing at his side.

The pact, to be signed on 2 April, is a measure of the post-Soviet economic decline of Belarus and its weak sense of national identity compared to other ex-Soviet republics, many of which seek closer co-operation with Russia but balk at moves that smack of a return to Moscow's rule. It is likely to worry Ukraine, which will not welcome signs that Russia is poised to devour its western neighbour.

Russia has long been aware that Belarus lies on a key route between Moscow and Berlin. Lukashenko does not share these concerns, but many of his liberal parliamentarians do. They were furious they

were not consulted, before he went to Moscow to give away a portion of their freedom.

Mr Lukashenko, a former collective-farm boss, displays some of the worst instincts of Soviet Bolshevism, from censoring the press, to banning trade unions and ignoring his own constitutional court. He has been pressing for further integration with Russia since his election in 1994, and backed attempts to inhibit the revival of the Belarusian language. Mr Lukashenko also supported the referendum which replaced the country's red-and-white national flag with a Soviet-style standard.

Lukashenko has ceased being a president. He is now outside the law and the constitution, Zenon Poznyak, leader of the Belarussian Popular Front, told the crowd on the streets of Minsk.

Klaus Kinkel, the Foreign Minister who was until last year the party's chairman.

The clear winners of the night were the Free Democrats, who had not won five per cent of the vote in any poll since 1994 and were in danger of disappearing from the stage. "It's a fantastic result," commented

Kohl's local victories keep coalition on course

Bonn — Helmut Kohl's coalition government won a strong endorsement from voters last night in elections to three regional assemblies, writes Imre Karacs.

Despite record unemployment, the Christian Democrats and Free Democrats who form the government in Bonn

preserved, or increased, their share of the vote. The Greens continued to improve, while the Social Democrats, the largest opposition party, lost up to 5 per cent.

The Social Democrats' Euro-sceptic and anti-immigrant campaign in the prosperous southern state of Baden-Württemberg received a powerful rebuff. Even more embarrassingly, the SPD's call to limit immigration appears to have played into the hands of the extreme right. The Republican Party, whose xenophobia had lost its appeal since its success four years ago, bounced back into the state's assembly with 7.5

per cent of the vote, thanks to the passions stirred up by the Social Democrats.

The clear winners of the night were the Free Democrats, who had not won five per cent of the vote in any poll since 1994 and were in danger of disappearing from the stage. "It's a fantastic result," commented

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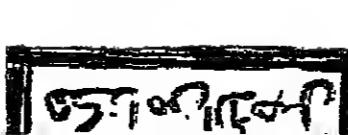
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Lifeless language obscures political truths. Andrew Marr applies George Orwell's thesis to today's power brokers

Orwellian thoughts

Most people who bother with the matter at all would admit that the English language is in a bad way. That was how George Orwell began *Politics and the English Language*, published 50 years ago this April. It was one of his most subtly influential essays, an almost holy text for many thousands of journalists and other writers throughout the English-speaking world. In it Orwell made a stirring call to arms, shouting out for clear, clean English. In the essay, and through the example of his own vigorous prose, he demonstrated that the state of the language was a political question. Lizard-eyed power hides behind pretentious sentences. Thought corrupts language and language corrupts thought, and to reform the language is to reform politics, too. Half a century later, this remains a simple, but radical test of our political culture. How do we shape up? Is the language still in a bad way?

Conservative admirers of Orwell tend to regard him as a defender of stability and orthodoxy in English, but he was hunting a different game from the trustees of "Heritage English". His target was not linguistic change or lack of orthodoxy, but sloppy, pretentious and abstract thinking, composed of ready-made phrases "tacked together like the sections of a prefabricated hen-house". These, he notes, are often built up of pretentious latinate words ("render inoperative", "amendatory") or dead metaphors ("take up cudgels", "Achilles' heel"). They are often abstract – "the whole tendency of modern prose is away from concreteness."

But Orwell's argument only starts with his professional dislike for tepid, muddled sentences. He was aiming higher and, as usual, his main intention was political. In one of the essay's key passages he writes that ready-made phrases "will construct sentences for you, even think your thoughts for you ... and will perform the important service of partially concealing your meaning even from yourself". It is at this point that the special connection between politics and the debasement of language becomes clear. Orthodoxy, of whatever colour, seems to demand a lifeless, imitative style.

Connaisseurs of Conservative Party handbooks, Labour pamphlets on training, and the mass-produced speeches of many 1990 politicians will recognise all that. But as one reads through Orwell's essay, it becomes obvious that his argument about the spreading evil of bad political writing has dated. He was talking about Stalinism and imperialism in the Forties, with its defeat, many of the phrases that made Orwell's style have withered too. "Iron heel" or "the fascist octopus" would not be seriously used today; they belong to the junkyard of the mid-century clash of ideologies.

There is no political evil in the world today as great as Stalinism, nor any wide-spread language of euphemism as threatening as the Stalinist rantings of 1946. There are living evils, yes, and specialists in evil euphemism, from the IRA to Ratko Mladic. But many of the places suffering famine, dictatorship, civil war or other preventable and political ills, are brought into our imaginations by television, thus diminishing the power of political euphemism. The coverage of the Vietnam war is rightly seen as the beginning of the end for words such as "pacification"; you could see the bombs, you could hear the burning children. Our government may have failed in its response to the Bosnian war; but its reality was starkly available to almost every

British citizen. In the political information business, the terms of trade have shifted since the Forties and greatly for the better. It is not only that the gross lies of murderous regimes are rarer in the world, and easier to disprove. At a more mundane level, I would argue that political prose, in mainstream English books and newspapers, is in good shape – perhaps, for anyone who has read Orwell's warnings, surprisingly good shape. On the basis of my scattered reading of newspapers and periodicals of 20 to 30 years ago, and of political pamphlets from the post-war period, I suspect we may be living in a silver, if not golden, age for this kind of prose.

It is partly that we have some excellent writers. Alan Watkins, of the *Independent on Sunday*, is the best of all political writers in the sense of writing beautiful English. But there are a large number of serious rivals, including Neal Ascherson, Ian Bell, Simon Jenkins, Barbara Amiel and Matthew Paris. In the US, we have had Christopher Lasch, Garry Wills, Wendell Berry, William Safire, Jane Jacobs and many more.

As clear, unpretentious writers I would also add many of the tabloid political journalists, including the *Sun* leader writers, even though Orwell would have loathed that newspaper. Clean English does not always make for admirable opinions. But it beeps one judge and deal with opinions. They are not disguised by pretentious, pseudo-scientific language or blocks of prefabricated

the blandness of much political language. Perhaps for the first time this century, there is nobody who causes MPs to leave the chamber for the sheer joy of listening to great political English. Michael Foot and Enoch Powell are reckoned to be the last of that kind. Yet there are good younger speakers. The chamber is dying for more basic reasons than its rhetorical thinness.

One of them is the rise to primacy of radio and television studios as the new arena. And this, too, has had its effect on political English. Programmes such as BBC *Politics Today*, *Channel 4 News* and *Newsnight* have encouraged the evolution of a complex ritual of attack and defence. Interviewers have become more direct, assertive and persistent, as well as skilled in asking judgemental questions ("You've made a bog of this, haven't you, minister?"). Their game has partly been to extract damaging-looking quotes that become the next day's news stories, helping to promote the programme on which the politician goofed.

Politicians, becoming wise to this, have developed defensive strategies. They believe that if they get their prepared soundbite message over, day after day, then voters will start believing it. So very often they now ignore the interviewer's question, answering a different question. Or they dance aside. Such gross evasions have spread now from broadcast arguments to the chamber itself.

and civil servants in order to deceive or reassure themselves. Lord Armstrong's ironic phrase "economical with the truth" has entered the language. In his evidence to the *Scott Inquiry*, the Foreign Office mandarin David Gore-Booth did almost as well by suggesting that "half a picture can be accurate". Sir Richard Scott's own report had its tortured English, too, including the now notorious double negatives with which he tried to half protect the ministers whom, in plain prose, he would have condemned explicitly. It became possible for parliament to have been deliberately misled, but without "duplicious intent". This reflected the judge's agonised struggle with politicians fighting in private for their careers.

To pursue *dangerously bad English*, we must ask where power and influence reside, and look there for gobbledegook, blather and smarm. Power lives, even now, in Whitehall, and in the academic self-promoters who try to direct and limit political argument. But, more than all of this, power lives in corporations, in markets and marketing. We live now in a partly privatised world. And it is not surprising that some of the worst new abuses of language come from the private sector, not the public sector. They pour from half-yearly reports and the public relations statements from embarrassed chairmen of privatised utilities and the promotional ideas of big corporations. There is the bogwash of management consultancy, the downscaling and delayering, the use of words such as "efficiency" to mean always sackings and never good work, the simple equation of free people with free trade. These are the euphemisms of contemporary power.

From the art establishment to the big cheeses of big business, there are many powerful people whose use of English is cynical – designed to deflect thinking. This is never trivial, because bad English is always a sign, as Orwell suggested, of insincerity or sloppy thought. But it can be fought, with the aid of constant ridicule. And this is happening. From the Plain English campaign to "Pseud's Corner" in *Private Eye*, from the mockery of Gordon Brown's "endogenous growth theory" to the attacks on Sir Richard Scott's double negatives, this remains a country passionately committed to plain speech and instinctive in its hostility to overblown English. In that way, we are a truly Orwellian country.

And Orwell was, to be honest, a bit of a thug on this subject. His boots loved the feel of fat intellectual bottoms perhaps rather too much. No philistine himself, he has made British public life just a little safer for philistines. But for democracy, his defence of plain English has been an absolute and important good. He thought that political language is "designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind".

This his 1946 essay concluded, could not be changed in an instant – "but one can at least change one's own habits". And the people who have read him since and changed their habits have, cumulatively, a great influence, helping the language fight back against elitism, abstraction and the rule of experts. That fight is never over. But without Orwell, this would be a country with worse political writing and argument. Because of that, Orwell is not just a great writer; he is one of the great political reformers of the century.

A fuller version of this article appears in the April issue of *Prospect* magazine.



George Orwell: his 50-year-old lessons on political language are still needed

The language of evasion is, in its way, as profound a corruption of the English language as the bombastic prose described by Orwell

phraseology intended to batter the reader into acquiescence. Good political prose is democratic in effect because it alerts, provokes a response. It wakes us up and engages us in the argument – all of us, not only the political junkies.

Enough, though, of Pangloss. Orwell ranged widely in the five examples of bad political writing he opened his essay with – two by professors, one from an essay on psychology in a political magazine, one from a Communist pamphlet and one from a letter in *Tribune*. Taking this broader spectrum, the condition of political English is no better than in the Forties, and probably worse.

Politicians themselves can occasionally still use good English. I have recently read dozens of *Hansard* debates from the start of the century, the Twenties and Thirties, and the immediate post-war period. And it is simply not true that lifeless or incoherent specificity is a modern failing. Even so, the greats then were great, while among today's leading politicians there are few good speakers or writers. John Major's numbing abuse of the language is worse than most; but there are few one-liners to for pleasure. Tepid clichés and bland, tasteless UHT thinking gurgle from the radio and cackle on the page.

One cannot, though, divorce the speaking style of today's politics from the politics itself, or its technologies. Ours is not a time of clashing ideology or thrilling ideas. As new Labour embraces globalisation, the law of the market and individualism, there is no great economic argument between the parties that might spark into moral outrage or hot words; and the blandness of the economic and social argument is reflected in

John Major and many other ministers regularly use shameless non-answers during parliamentary questions. I do not think MPs would put up with them had they not been coarsened like the rest of us, by the rituals of broadcasting. If most of us behaved this way in real life, ignoring inconvenient questions, conducting discussions with silent and invisible interlocutors, we would be advised to see a doctor. It is, in its way, as profound a corruption of the language as the bombastic prose described by Orwell.

But he would not – and did not – base his analysis of English on the sayings of politicians, either in speeches or in parliamentary exchanges. He was more concerned to fight bombast and obfuscation in the bigger pond of political comment and conversation. In that wider sense, covering academia, the bureaucratic prose of government and the surrounding verbal pollution of marketing, the condition of English is very bad. Some complicated ideas require complicated language. Much academic language, though, is more to do with the cult of the departmental specialist, surrounding themselves with cult words designed to keep trespassers away.

Orwell can go too far in his assault on abstract words; he comes close at times to championing an English without abstract thought or the ability to argue through complicated policy problems. But Orwell's instinctive hostility to abstract language is sound, and confirmed today by a thousand works of political theory.

Then there is bureaucratic English, which is often only circumlocution, dazing and tedious, but not evil in effect. More sinister is the twisted English used by ministers

A fuller version of this article appears in the April issue of *Prospect* magazine.

Portillo facing the Twigg test

Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary (below), is about to find his endorsement of the forces' ban on gay servicemen – and women – will come to haunt him in the next general election campaign. The Labour Party has selected Stephen Twigg, the chief whip on Islington council as its candidate to wrest Mr Portillo's 15,000 majority from him.

Mr Twigg has been a gay activist for some years, and tells me that while he will be campaigning on a mainstream Labour agenda, he will definitely be raising the forces ban on the hustings and challenging Mr Portillo to a face-to-face debate to discuss that and other equality issues. "I will be challenging him to support the principle of equality of opportunity and equality before the law," he said.

Mr Twigg's selection was welcomed by a gay activist Labour candidate of yesterday, Peter Tatchell. He said: "It's marvellous that there's going to be at least one gay candidate fighting the Enfield Southgate constituency and pledged to fight for homosexual equality."

Pop go Paisley's chances of stardom

Those who recall Sir David Steel's pre 1983 election rap "I Feel Liberal" and Neil Kinnock's unforgettable appearance as Tracey Ullman's "My Guy" will be disappointed to learn that the Reverend Ian Paisley will not be joining the political pop hall of fame.

The cross-border Irish band The Wild Spiritz wrote to Dr Paisley ask-

ing him to appear in their latest video and dangled various carrots in front of his nose: "It'll be a gas, we get to wear Doc Martens... and bomber jackets". The leader of the Democratic Unionist Party was also sent a list of forthcoming concert dates and offered the

Why Sir Peter Hall needs attention

I made a poster advertising a new production coming to the West End next month. It's a Pevsner-comedy, translated by Sir Peter Hall and his wife Nicki Hall and starring Felicity Kendal as a high-class Parisian... where is this in any chance related to another play?

Attention, then at the Theatre Royal, Bath the week before the West End opening? That is a Feydeau farce starring Felicity Kendal, the publicist for *My Fair Lady*, lacrosse-playing Sharon Keast, who is also publicist for *Emily Needs Attention*.

Felicity Kendal plays a tart lost in translation, plays are she agrees, one and the same. The original French title is *Occupé en d'Amélie*, and Sir Peter and Lady Hall translated it as *Emily Needs Attention*, deciding that *Madame for Me* was a truer translation after the Bath poster and programmes had been printed. Personally, I think their original translation was catcher. And there's still time to change it back and confuse the foreigners further.

chance to "drop in and hoist up a few tall, cool ones and hang on the pipe". The response was uncharacteristically meek. "Dr Paisley said it was very nice of the people to consider him, but he didn't think it was appropriate."

It was an interesting concept, but there were a number of reasons why he couldn't take part," said his son, also called Ian.

Perhaps one reason was the title of the song – "Catholic West Belfast".

Thigh fidelity for Elton and Elvis

Watford football club's wife president, Mr Elton John (right), should ask the club's lottery co-ordinator, Peter Storey, to bare his thigh for him. Though Mr Storey has been too shy to tell his boss, he has a tattoo of Elton on his thigh. I'd be tempted to say that greater love for Watford Football Club has no man, were it not for the fact that he has a tattoo of Elvis Presley on his other thigh.

Sense and insensitivity

I was diverted from the tedium of a journey by public transport yesterday when two dishevelled looking chaps, more than a little the worse for wear, lurched on to the tube at Waterloo Station. "Great film," one of them slurred. "But it was nothing like the book. Bloody great that book. Why mess about with it?" The other one, whose shoes were tied up with string, shrugged and wiped his nose on his sleeve. "That bit, though..." His companion nodded sagely.

Ah, I thought. I know what they're talking about. *Trainspotting*, Irvine Welsh's study of urban decay and heroin misuse in the less picturesque parts of Edinburgh. A film that had drawn even two young men without a bootlace between them to the cinema. And "that bit", the toilet scene, when Renton literally goes swimming in the cistern of "the worst toilet in Scotland"...

The first chap took a swig from his can of lager. "Emma Thompson was good," he said, "but I wouldn't have done Willoughby like that, myself."

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Testing time for privatisation

The regulators who oversee the privatised monopolies that supply electricity, gas, water and phone services, face a time of trial. During the next few weeks, the public pronouncements of Office of Telecommunications chief Don Cruikshank and the Director General of the Office of Water Services, Ian Byatt, will merit the closest attention. They will be making critical decisions. Their performance rests not just on how much consumers will be paying for water and phone use at the century's turn, but the fate of the privatisation programme itself.

The way water is regulated will be shown up as Yorkshire Water answers charges of incompetence in its investment planning for pipes and its handling of last summer's drought. Next month in the West Country, a fascinating experiment – masterminded by the Office of Gas Supply – starts transforming British Gas into a "common carrier" for competing gas suppliers, which if successful could mean there is less need for regulation at all.

Privatisation does indeed rank as one of the great achievements of the period of Conservative rule that began in 1979. But the book is not yet closed, and the way the regulators treat the market movements that are leading to growing concentration in supply will be a significant episode in privatisation history.

The quality of water management is variable, to say the least, and one way to force bad managers out is by hostile takeover. The management of the utility providing water and sewerage in Devon and Cornwall has a mixed track record which includes (accidentally) poisoning locals and releasing thousands of gallons of their drinking water into the English Channel. Last week Severn Trent Water announced a bid for South West Water, which is already "in play" after an earlier bid by Wessex. This will be presented as a way of substituting a more effective management team. But who is to judge? These are, in their regions, nearly pure monopolies; the water pincers cannot fail; the only regular and effective stimulus to efficiency and effectiveness is the regulator.

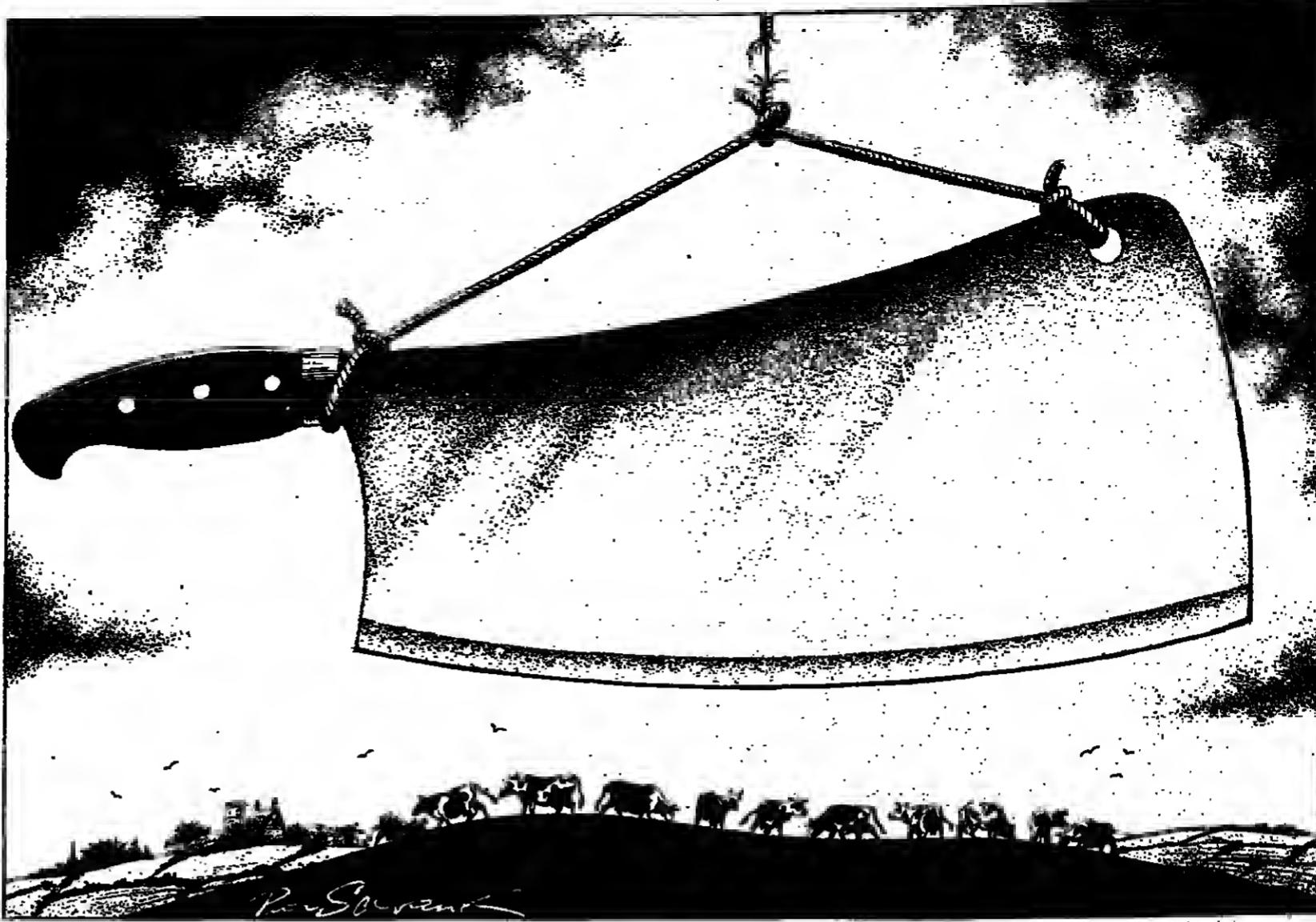
No amount of rhetoric about market forces can relieve the government's regula-

tors from the need to protect consumers against price abuse. When Northumbria Water was taken over by the French Compagnie Lyonnaise des Eaux it insisted on a consumer bonus in the form of domestic water charge reductions. That surely is going to be a minimum precondition if South West Water is merged. But that is not the only consideration. Will investment plans – Devon and Cornwall need more water storage – expand? What if Wessex or Severn Trent, bidding competitively, end up paying over the odds for South West? Where is the consumer interest in that?

These are hard questions, but is Ofwat capable of answering them? The nagging doubt must be whether its small Birmingham office is competent to deal with industrial wide boys and City slickers.

Meanwhile, British Telecommunications plc and Cable and Wireless are out a'courting. Will they, won't they? Their marriage would dramatically change the basis on which the Office of Telecommunications has operated since the early 1980s. Till now Oftel's line has been to maximise competition. Logic dictates it should resist further concentration in the domestic telecoms market. But BT has, over the years, made a robust case for size, especially in global markets. Is Oftel the competent judge? It is not enough to say these conflicts of interest will be resolved as, if it is, the Monopolies and Mergers Commission steps in as the superior judge. BT's fate is, whether the government likes the phrase or not, a question of industrial policy, which ministers – who only the other week set up a new Cabinet committee on the future shape of computers and telecoms – cannot duck.

Water and telecoms are not the only arenas in which the state's capacity to keep abreast of market movements has been called into question. But these markets are special; they have been created by the government. The public needs to be assured that its interests are being competently and consistently considered. Till now these watchdogs have basked in public approval. They claim to be independent. But they also need to be sharp, forward-looking, savvy and courageous enough to say so, whichever way share prices move.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BSE is rife in dairy herds so why don't we worry about milk?

Sir: Virtually all BSE cases have occurred in dairy herds. Dairy herds are not slaughtered for beef. This means that what we eat as beef is not affected by the disease.

On the other hand, what the Government have not addressed is the problem with milk and cheese and other associated dairy products. If dairy herds are seriously affected by BSE, what we should really be concerned about is milk and cheese derived from dairy cows.

JAMES HALE
London SE15

Sir: My company has marketed around 13,000 fat steers and heifers since the outbreak of BSE and we have not had a single case of BSE. I understand that the occurrence of BSE in cattle slaughtered under two and a half years old is extremely low.

Around 160,000 cases of BSE have been confirmed and very nearly all of these are in dairy cows which had been fed meat and bone meal concentrate during the 1980s.

The cattle we fatten are, and always have been, fed pure feed, i.e. grass, silage, maize, barley and minerals, as are very nearly all beef cattle in the UK. These cattle are marketed as "clean cattle" because they have not been used for breeding and I have not heard

of anyone having had a "clean animal" go down with BSE. The vast majority of these animals would be slaughtered under two and a half years of age.

It seems rather harsh to throw these cattle into the barrel with old dairy cows and say "there is an unquantifiable risk in eating beef" because the Government or scientists cannot give a zero risk statement on the safety of beef.

When I inspected my cattle this evening they, as always, looked a picture of healthy thriving animals and I cannot help but wonder what "bungling" has gone on by scientists, government, media, whoever?

If the disease comes from feeding meat and bone meal to the cattle and meat and bone meal have been banned for seven years, how can "clean" cattle, slaughtered when they are two and a half years old, (born four and a half years after the ban) be infected with BSE?

JOHN SMITH
Hereford
The writer is using a pseudonym.

Sir: If milk is completely safe, why, in 1988, did the Southwood committee decide that any milk from BSE-infected cattle should be destroyed?

ROGER HOUGHTON
Bath

Sir: The last Labour government had prepared regulations to control the production of ruminant derived protein, in particular for use in animal feed. The "marker mad" Conservative Party, on entering government, rejected the regulations and left the industry to draw up its own guidelines.

Deregulation meant less stringent procedures, causing animal feed not to be heated to appropriate temperatures, which allowed the scrapie contagion from sheep's brains to survive the rendering process and cause the BSE outbreak. This is one area of policy in which the Labour Party has been proven continually entirely correct.

JOEY HUGHES
Socialist & Environment & Resources Association
London N4

Sir: Who originally conceived of the bizarre, cost-cutting notion of feeding offal to cud-chewing herbivores?

JOHN STARIN
Hereford

Sir: My family and I stopped eating beef on our return to the UK in 1990. At the time, it was apparent that the Government was responsible for a large scale experiment to see if prions (the transmissible agent in BSE/CJD) were orally transmissible from beef to humans. The evidence is gathering that prions are orally transmissible to humans. The ease of that transmission will determine whether there will be tens of cases of CJD, hundreds or thousands attributable to the decision to await events.

SIR HUGH LEGGATT
Vevey, Switzerland

The Government should have taken steps to eradicate BSE from the British herd as soon as the epidemic became apparent. The Government's defence has been that it took the best scientific advice. The Government took selective advice from the scientific and medical establishment whose judgement may have been influenced by short term political expediency.

SIR JAMES ELLIS
Consultant Neurologist
North Staffordshire
Royal Infirmary
Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire

Sir: Is the legacy of 17 years of Tory government to be the death of up to half a million people because they thought it more important not to offend the farming lobby than to safeguard the health of the nation?

V M CREWS
Beckenham, Kent

Sir: Can the Germans, French, Austrians and Italians guarantee that they have not already got CJD

in the future in BSE in their cattle?

Their lands adjoin those of Switzerland where some 200 cases have been notified to date. What goes on please?

SIR HUGH LEGGATT
Vevey, Switzerland

Sir: Now that European countries have banned the export of British beef as there is an "extremely small" risk of it causing CJD will they also ban the export of British cigarettes which have an extremely high risk of causing lung cancer, heart disease, emphysema, bladder cancer, stomach ulcers...

DR MICHAEL INGRAM
Radlett, Hertfordshire

Sir: We have bred dogs over a period in excess of 15 years, all of which, puppies included, have been fed dairy on raw tripe, which consists largely of beef offal, as does much of the tinned dog food on the market. Over this period we have never seen a single case of anything that could be considered to express the symptoms of BSE or CJD in our dogs or their offspring.

How small is the "extremely small" risk of contracting CJD?

SIR & SISTER RICHARDSON
Saxon Lodge,
Boarding Kennels & Cattery
Weekly, Essex

Sir: We have bred dogs over a period in excess of 15 years, all of which, puppies included, have been fed dairy on raw tripe, which consists largely of beef offal, as does much of the tinned dog food on the market. Over this period we have never seen a single case of anything that could be considered to express the symptoms of BSE or CJD in our dogs or their offspring.

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Sir: We have bred dogs over a period in excess of 15 years, all of which, puppies included, have been fed dairy on raw tripe, which consists largely of beef offal, as does much of the tinned dog food on the market. Over this period we have never seen a single case of anything that could be considered to express the symptoms of BSE or CJD in our dogs or their offspring.

How small is the "extremely small" risk of contracting CJD?

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Sinn Fein: united but split

Martin McGuinness may talk of 25 more years of violence, but most Republicans see peace talks as the only way forward

Martin McGuinness, in one of the first speeches at the weekend Sinn Fein Ard-Fheis (Annual Conference), conveyed to delegates the important message that there is no split in the Republican movement. "We are as together as we have been for 25 years. We are united. We will remain united," he declared.

McGuinness, as a map with the reputation for both militarism and an interest in political activity, has, in effect, often functioned as a liaison between the military and political elements of the Republican movement. As such, delegates were keenly interested to hear his message.

He was correct in signalling that there is no split: you can always tell when there is a split, because when there is one they start shooting at each other. The rule of thumb is that if there are no bodies at the roadside, there is no split.

What there is, however, is a chasm within the movement, a yawning gap between the IRA leader – who the other day threatened, "that's what the British want, we will give them another 25 years of war" – and the bulk of the Republican community, who want no such thing.

That community, the 80,000 or so who in Northern Ireland regularly vote for Sinn Fein, supported, or at least tolerated, violence for a quarter of a century. Most of them thought in military terms and for most of the troubles regarded the IRA, not Sinn Fein, as their coming edge which forced the world to pay attention to them.

The IRA ceasefire of August 1994 was, in Republican terms, an initiative of breathtaking scope, a unilateral move away from all that, a move towards a whole new mindset. They could have fought on, but the sense of relief that coursed through the Republican community showed widespread approval for the cessation.

Most in that community were clearly ready to bid farewell to the use of arms.

The mood of the previous Ard-Fheis, which was held in the wake of the ceasefire, was recalled at the weekend by Jim Gibney, one of Sinn Fein's more reflective leaders. He said: "Last year there was a great sense of expectation, of optimism of movement. I felt we had crossed the Rubicon of armed conflict. It seemed to me that, at last, dialogue as the instrument of

political change, was anchored centre-stage."

At the weekend, there was precious little buoyancy and optimism to be seen in a movement faced only with hard choices. Before the Docklands' bomb, Gibney and other Sinn Fein leaders, were proud of the new contacts and relationships they developed during the 17 months of cessation. They felt that Sinn Fein was, however slowly, getting somewhere.

The bomb propelled the movement in the opposite direction, reasserting its capacity for brute force but undermining its political gains. It damaged Adams and the Sinn Fein leadership and demonstrated to the world that the movement encompasses two starkly conflicting viewpoints. There may be unity on the point that they should not split, but there isn't any on what to do next, and the Republicans have little time to resolve their differences by leisurely debate. The peace process is now moving along on a tight schedule, with an election to be held on 30 May and talks to start on 10 June.

Sinn Fein now has a series of tactical decisions to make. It is unlikely to boycott the election itself, unless John Hume's SDLP decides to do so. But both Sinn Fein and the SDLP are unlikely to take part in the new forum, which will inevitably have a Unionist majority. In the meantime, as David Trimble's hardline weekend speech showed, all parties are moving into election mode with the familiar hardening of positions and consequent rise in politi-

cal and other tensions. The IRA, to judge from its violence and a series of belligerent statements, is in no mood to declare another ceasefire. This means that unless the unexpected happens, Sinn Fein looks like fighting the election while the IRA ceasefire is in effect.

One of David Trimble's original arguments for wanting an election was that it would provide everyone with a new mandate. But even if no IRA bombs go off during the election campaign, the fact that no IRA ceasefire exists means that Sinn Fein's mandate would be a highly ambiguous one which would do little to convince those suspicious of the party and its democratic credentials.

The Ard-Fheis heard no open criticism of the IRA, but judging from what Republicans say in private, many in Sinn Fein wish the Docklands' bomb had never happened and regard it as a serious setback. Republicans blame John Major and John Bruton rather than the IRA Army Council for the collapse of the cessation, but there is much uncertainty about the IRA's next move. At the moment, after four bombing incidents in London, it has pushed the pause button and there have been no attacks in Northern Ireland.

This could mean an internal IRA debate is underway; it could be a sign that the terrorists wanted to deliver a short, sharp, violent shock; it could be a recognition that the bombs have not been popular with the wider Republican community. But there could be more attacks at any moment, while there could also be violence from the Irish National Liberation Army or from the Loyalists, who also represent potential threats to peace.

At this point, the way ahead is surrounded by thorny thickets of questions of mistrust, de-commissioning of weapons, what should be first on the agenda for talks and so on. Unionists want cast-iron guarantees on de-commissioning; the IRA has said there won't be any this side of a negotiated settlement.

If the IRA is not intent on a return to war, then what it wants is talks with as few preconditions as possible. They do not want Sinn Fein to arrive at the conference table trussed up like a turkey, with major decisions having gone against them even before negotiations begin.

There will thus be no new IRA ceasefire unless the IRA is convinced that the negotiations will be for real. But the fact that there is no ceasefire means the peace process has become not so much an uphill path as a minefield.

This Ard-Fheis is by no means a re-dedication to another 25 years of violence. There were no ringing endorsements of armed struggle, and the prevailing opinion seemed to be that there was little alternative but to attempt to revive the peace process. That in itself is of critical importance. The Army Council may turn out to be intent on more war, or a combination of events may trigger off a new spiral of violence. There are many dangers around, but alongside them it is a source of hope that large numbers of Republicans would regard a reversion to full-scale violence as futile and ultimately doomed.

The Nervous Peace, the third collection of David McKitterick's journalism from the *Independent*, covering the period from the August 1994 IRA ceasefire to its breakdown in February of this year, was published last week by Blackstaff Press.



DAVID MCKITTERICK

There was precious little buoyancy in a movement faced only with hard choices

Why cartoon Britain keeps on winning

Animators are the success story of British film. But we risk losing them to Hollywood, warns Jayne Pilling

You won't see two of Britain's most popular stars among the glittering throng at the Oscars ceremony tonight, but Wallace and Gromit will be represented by Nick Park, the animator who created these much-loved Plastics characters. Winning the category of Best Animated Short with *A Close Shave*, would be a hat-trick for Park, as he already has two of those golden statuettes – but at least he won't be competing against himself, as he did in 1992 when his film school graduation piece, *A Grand Day Out*, vied with his first Channel 4-financed short, *Creature Comforts*, for the award. Two years later, another outing for that man and his dog, *The Wrong Trousers*, won again.

The appeal of Wallace and Gromit is doubtless linked to the cosy, nostalgic "forever England" atmosphere they evoke, and the ingenious mechanical solutions provided by eccentric inventor Wallace's long-suffering canine sidekick Gromit. Strong storylines and characters, along with technical virtuosity, have made these films popular with audiences here and abroad, perhaps for the novelty of seeing them in animated form.

But the success of British animation isn't confined to Nick Park alone. Over the past decade British animation has won the lion's share of all prizes at every major festival for animated film in the world over. The prestigious Cartoon d'Or, a prize for Best European Animated Film, has gone to British films almost every year since it began in 1990; the one exception was a film made in France (by a British animator).

British animated short films have won such a strong international reputation because of their astonishing range and diversity, both in technique and subject matter. They have long

since gone beyond the old distinction between "cartoons for kiddies" and "animation as art" – the latter an allegorical fable, usually concerned with man's inhumanity to man. Instead,

British animation has pioneered the concept of animation for adult audiences, which has become a crucial part of its appeal – and its impact.

Drawing from the experimental approach of art-college education, young animators have been making films on hitherto unlikely subjects – including incestuous abuse, autism, sexual relationships and UFO experiences – while the expressive potential of animation has led them to new techniques and materials.

Channel 4 was the catalyst for the animation explosion. Jeremy Isaacs, the channel's first chief executive, seeing that a remit to encourage minority viewing could extend beyond shocking soaps, hobby programming and hitherto unknown forms of sport established the first commissioning editor for animation, to finance short personal films. The striking number of award-winning films that emerged via Channel 4 created a critical mass of exciting work that has attracted many aspiring animators.

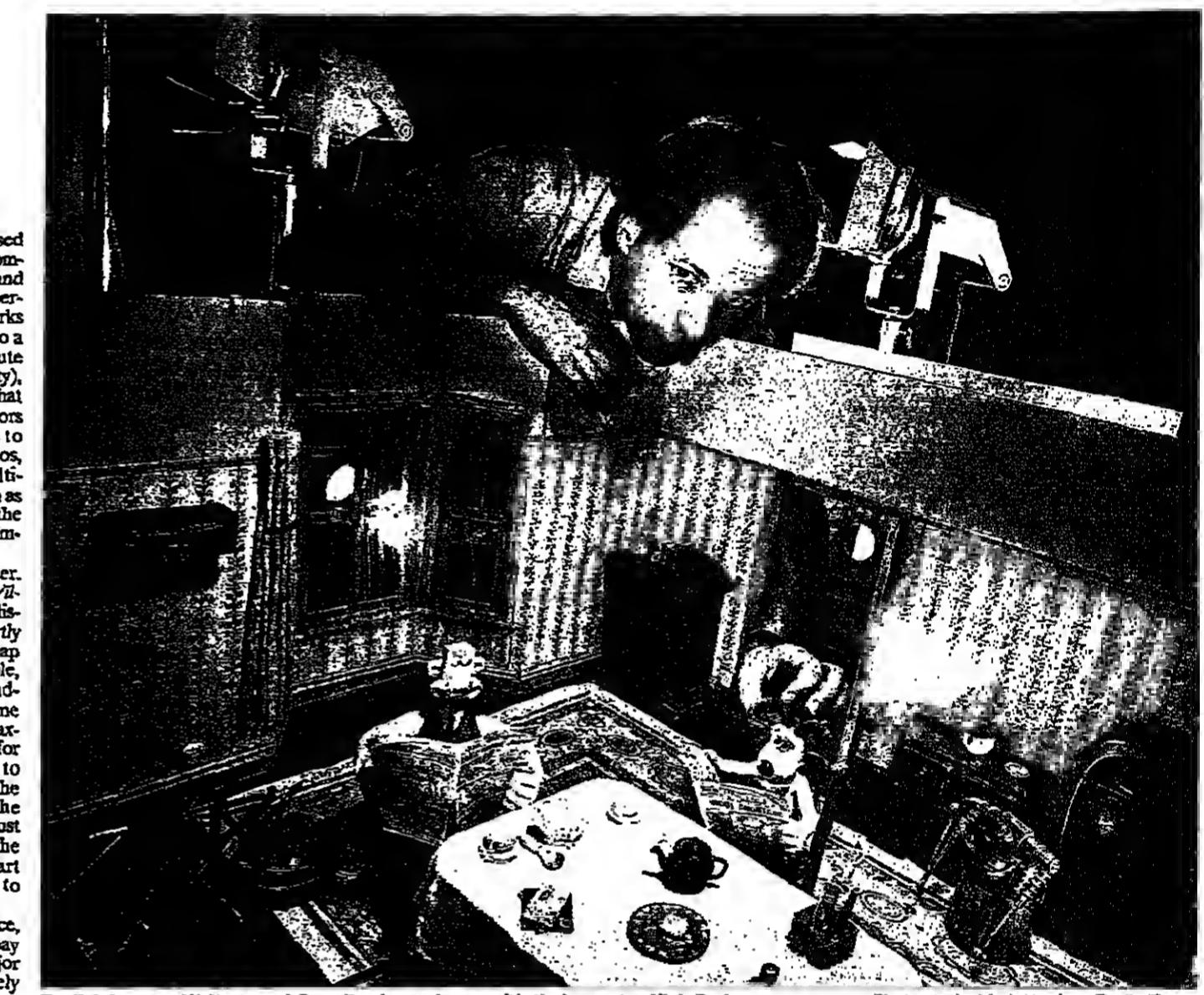
Many animators mix their own short film-making with more lucrative work on commercials. High-budget TV ads can also provide subsidised R&D: new techniques, expensive computer facilities can be tried out, and the experience fed back into more personal work. And sometimes it works in reverse: *Creature Comforts* led to a popular TV ad campaign (those cute zoo animals talking about electricity), and is just one of many short films that have inspired commercials. Animators in Britain also have opportunities to work on title sequences, rock videos, computer games, and now multi-media computer technologies (such as those in *Jurassic Park*) which blur the lines between what is "real" film-making and what is animation.

Channel 4 continues to pioneer.

The cult animated sitcom *Caption Vile*, shocked many with its ribald dissection of bed-sit life and it will shortly be followed by an animated soap opera. Yet this success is vulnerable, for Channel 4 and the other broadcasters do not seem to be able to come up with scheduling strategies to maximise the adult audience that exists for animation. Also, the BBC needs to invest in new talent, and recognise the importance of the short form to the development of that talent, not just rely on a Nick Park franchise. And the Government must protect the art school budgets where cuts threaten to stop the flow of young innovators.

In the wake of Disney's resurgence, and the realisation that adults will pay to see animated features, all the major Hollywood studios are desperately bidding against each other for scarce talent – and recruiting heavily in the UK. It would be a shame if British animation skills became simply part of the special-effects sector that has long serviced the Hollywood film industry.

Media coverage has largely ignored animation, the one consistent success story of the British film industry, and



English heroes: Wallace and Gromit relax at home with their creator Nick Park

Photograph: Mark Harrison/Radio Times

instead has focused on the hand-wringing and dire threats of doom and destruction that come from the lobby for feature films. It might be best to play to our strengths. Perhaps the recent parliamentary motion calling for recognition of animation, in all its

aspects, as a popular art-form will prompt the Lottery to fund the development of animation as part of our unique national heritage.

The writer is the organiser of the British Animation Awards.

The NHS's great kidney failure

Britain has dialysis facilities among the worst in Europe but a legal reform could save many lives

"Thousands Dead In Medical Disaster!" That would be quite a headline. Who? Where? When? Luckily for the Government, no one knows who they are, although the Department of Health is sitting on a report that shows at least a thousand people a year die of kidney failure because of the lack of kidney dialysis facilities.

Unfortunately I cannot begin this column with a telling, indignant quote from a grieving next-of-kin because relatives of the dead patients rarely discover that their loved one had renal failure or that their lives could have been saved. People are so trusting when a doctor says solemnly, "Sorry, there's nothing more I can do." The death certificate will almost certainly give heart failure or pneumonia as the immediate cause and not the kidney failure that precipitated it. But if we had a thousand names and faces, a roll-call of the annual dead, then public indignation would soon put a stop to it.

How do we know so many die? Because the Department of Health commissioned a report, the Renal Service Review, exploring the erratic provision of kidney treatments. The report was delivered back in the autumn of 1994. The department promised to publish it, but has prevaricated.

This is what it says: all suitable patients up to the age of 80 should get life-saving renal dialysis, but many never get the chance. On average, 80 new patients in every million of the population will need treatment for kidney failure each year, but in Britain only 65 people per million get it. Among European countries, only



In Europe only Bulgaria dialyses fewer people per head

taken a considerable time to consider all its implications.

The mounting strain on some hospitals means some patients are being turned away, referred to other equally full units. Some consultants are advising patients to turn up in accident and emergency in acute renal failure, forcing the hospital to take them in. Some units have cut down dialysis treatments from three times a week to twice, weakening their patients. Just one typical example: Dr Leslie Sellers, renal specialist at Hull Royal Infirmary, had an emergency management meeting last week which decided no new patients could be taken on. Renal failure cases will be "redirected" to already overstuffed units in Sheffield or Leeds.

Health authorities don't realise that we are getting more and more patients every year," he says. But those 1,000 or more who die are

those who never reach the specialists, never referred by local doctors. Many are over 60, which these days hardly counts as old age. Once kidney failure sets in, they will last only about three weeks. Professor John Walls, president of the Renal Association, which has been lobbying ministers, says, "Renal disease can be non-descript, with flu-like symptoms, so people may never know they had it. There is a huge discrepancy in services and those who don't live near a unit are not likely to be referred for dialysis."

David Poulter, chairman of the National Kidney Federation, says, "There is no waiting list for total renal failure. They are dead." He adds, "It is not a pleasant way to die. Unable to get rid of water from the body, your lungs fill up and you drown." The death certificate calls it pneumonia.

Professor Stewart Cameron, a member of the committee that drew up the unpublished report, stresses that they were conservative in assessing how many more people would benefit from dialysis. "It can be a great mistake to dialyse everyone. If someone has severe other complications, or if Alzheimer's sets in you can wish you had never started."

But dialysis is no treat, living forever on a strict diet with only a litre of fluid a day. It deeply disrupts normal life and not surprisingly, dialysis patients have a suicide rate 14 times higher than average. On the other hand, those who have had a kidney transplant suffer no greater suicide rate. More than a third of those on dialysis are waiting for a kidney but the waiting list grows year by year, currently at 5,285. Fewer road accidents

and better treatment for brain injury means fewer donors. The hope is that kidneys from genetically engineered pigs may offer the solution, but if that does become safe and routine, it will still be a few years ahead.

The British Medical Association and British Transplant Society has called for a change in the law that could yield many more organs. If dying patients could be put on to ventilators to keep their organs usable, twice as many kidneys might be made available. The Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital started to ask families if they could donate kidneys as soon as they had stopped breathing naturally, and they doubled the number of donors as a result. But the Department of Health warned that doctors could be charged with criminal assault for giving a patient treatment not designed to be of value to him, so it was stopped. A change in that law would make huge inroads into the waiting list.

Saving another 1,000 people will be expensive. Patients are much cheaper dead, since dialysis costs £20,000 a year per patient. But if this law on ventilating donors were reformed it could save a great deal of money, for a transplant costs £15,000, plus only £3,000 a year in drugs thereafter.

Some doctors are beginning to advocate an even more radical solution, though politicians are likely to be too squeamish to adopt it. There is no convincing ethical reason why living people should not be allowed to sell their kidneys on the open market, a move that would certainly end the waiting list altogether. But if no one dares grasp this uncomfortable idea, then ventiling the dead is a far better option.

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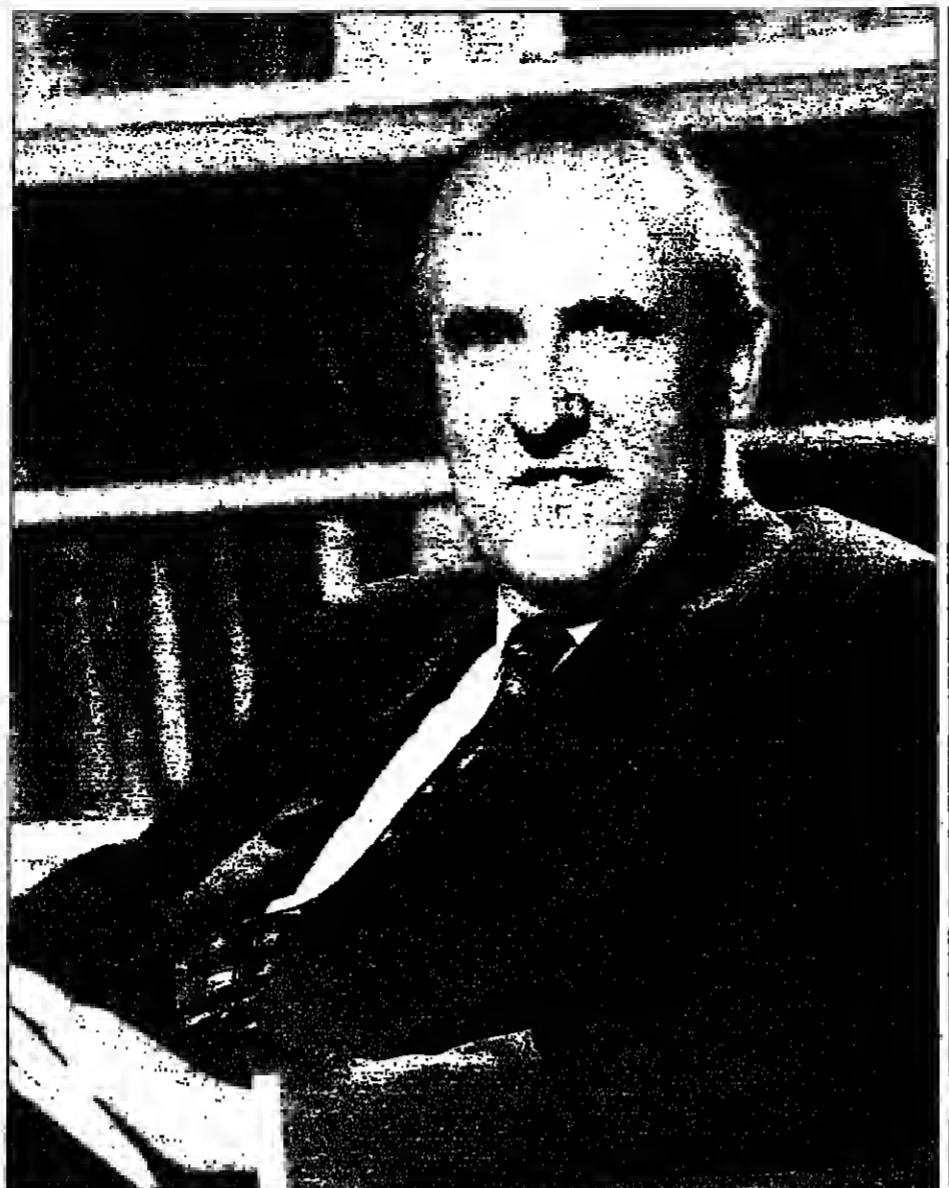
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16
obituaries/gazetteProfessor
P. A. M.
Clemoes

P.A.M. Clemoes was one of the world's foremost scholars in the field of Anglo-Saxon studies. By the example of his meticulous scholarship, and especially by his breadth of vision and calm administrative skill, he helped to transform the ways in which Old English literature is taught and studied the world over.

His leadership of the Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic at Cambridge University, from 1969 to 1982, was inspired. His view was that small subjects such as he were under potential threat; his strategy was to build up the strength of the Department by appointing younger scholars who would secure its reputation for the foreseeable future. He characteristically appointed scholars whose expertise spanned several languages and disciplines, and it is a result of his vision that the Department is now internationally regarded as a centre of outstanding excellence in all fields of its activity.

Clemoes' interdisciplinary approach to his subject determined the orientation of the International Society of Anglo-Saxons (ISAS). As a founding member, and for which he hosted a highly successful conference in Cambridge in 1985 (which, happily, coincided with the presentation to him of a Festschrift to which many of the world's most distinguished Anglo-Saxons had contributed), More recently, in his role as Director from 1985 to 1993 of the project *Fonter Anglo-Saxonic*, which holds a register of written sources used by authors in Anglo-Saxon England, he was able to bring his interdisciplinary perspective and organisational skills to the development of an international project which has become increasingly vital to the field.

Clemoes was born at Southend-on-Sea, Essex, where his father was a banker with the Bank of New Zealand. After completing his schooling at nearby Brentwood School, his earliest ambition was to be an actor (his gifts for this calling could be glimpsed, even late in life, in his commanding physical presence and his resonant recital of Old English poetry). He had just won a place at RADA when the Second World War intervened.

During the war he served in the Signals Corps, first in Egypt, then later with the occupying forces in Germany. This

Clemoes: a lifetime's reflection on the symbolic meanings of Old English poetry

led to the founding in 1972 of the journal *Anglo-Saxon England*, published by the Cambridge University Press, which, after nearly a quarter-century of existence, is indisputably the premier journal in the field. As its founder and chief editor (vols 1-18) he was able to attract and sponsor work on all aspects of Anglo-Saxon studies – literary, philological, historical, archaeological, numismatic, archaeological – and to encourage younger scholars to develop, by bringing his own meticulous scholarly standards to bear on the publication of their work. *Anglo-Saxon England* is one of his greatest legacies to the scholarly world.

During the years in which he was chief editor of *Anglo-Saxon England*, he had very little time for his own research (the potential of studying Old English literature from an interdisciplinary perspective (a number of his early publications seek to explain Old English poetry by reference to sculpture and manuscript illumination, for example); furthermore, having produced *Festschriften* for his two predecessors, he acquired exceptional experience in the editing of scholarly publications. This, in combination with his interdisciplinary orientation,

led to the founding in 1972 of the journal *Anglo-Saxon England*, published by the Cambridge University Press, which, after nearly a quarter-century of existence, is indisputably the premier journal in the field. As its founder and chief editor (vols 1-18) he was able to attract and sponsor work on all aspects of Anglo-Saxon studies – literary, philological, historical, archaeological, numismatic, archaeological – and to encourage younger scholars to develop, by bringing his own meticulous scholarly standards to bear on the publication of their work. *Anglo-Saxon England* is one of his greatest legacies to the scholarly world.

After more than a decade's work the first of these came to fruition with the publication in 1995 of his massive *Interactions of Thought and Language in Old English Poetry*, at 525 pages, probably the longest monograph ever devoted to the subject of Old English poetry; it is the highly personal result of a lifetime's reflection on the symbolic meanings of Old English poetry. Some of its arguments, for example concerning the cultural context in which Beowulf was composed, are sure to influence thinking in the field for many years. He did not live to see the publication of his edition of *Ælfric*; but he was working on the first proofs at the time of his death, and publication by the Early English Text Society is scheduled for 1997.

Peter Clemoes was not a flamboyant man; but in his calm and modest way he achieved far more for the field of Anglo-Saxon studies than many of his more flamboyant (and less determined) colleagues. In personal terms he was a kindly man of utter probity and honesty, never given to making rash or exaggerated statements (perhaps his most characteristic expression was "Steady on"). He was venerated by the members of his Department for his commitment to the advancement of Anglo-Saxon studies. He was deeply loyal to the Department, as well as to Emmanuel College and his colleagues there (with whom he habitually enjoyed a game of postprandial bowls), and was a devout Christian who participated fully in the activities of his local church in Chesterton.

Michael Lapidge

Peter Alan Martin Clemoes, Anglo-Saxon scholar; born Southend-on-Sea, Essex, 20 January 1920; Lecturer in English, Reading University 1955-61; Lecturer in Anglo-Saxon, Cambridge University 1961-69, Erling and Bosworth Professor of Anglo-Saxon 1969-82 (Emeritus); Official Fellow, Emmanuel College, Cambridge 1962-69, College Lecturer in English 1963-69, Director of Studies in English 1963-69; Tutor 1966-68; Professorial Fellow 1969-82; Life Fellow 1982-96; Fellow, Queen Mary and Westfield College, London 1975-90; married 1956 Jean Grew (two sons); died Cambridge 16 March 1996.

Norrie Tomter



The Scottish Peat and Land Development Association (Spalding) has long been in the vanguard of promoting the enlightened use of rural resources and indeed of the environmental movement. It was founded in the 1950s by Norrie Tomter and her second husband, Anders, a Norwegian peat specialist who edited and wrote much of the *Scottish Peat Survey*, a four-volume treatise published by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for Scotland (Dafs) between 1964 and 1966.

The Tomters were true environmentalists, two decades before environmental issues became fashionable. Moreover, they were practical in their ideas, and won the support of Jack Macay (later Viscount Muirshiel) and Michael Noble, successive Conservative Secretaries of State for Scotland, who enthusiastically endorsed the advice of civil servants in Dafs, who commissioned the study.

With the coming of 1964, the Labour government in 1964, the new Secretary of State, William Ross, continued the initiative begun under his Conservative predecessors, which eventually resulted in a number of peat-

based projects such as Easter Inch Moss, near Blackburn, West Lothian. Conservation and rationalisation of peat extraction enhanced an area deplored by frogs from the shale-oil industry, which had become defunct in 1962. As the local MP I saw at first hand the excellent result of implementing the Tomters' academic work and the improvement it brought to the environment of many of my constituents who worked at the British Motor Corporation (BMC), Bathgate.

The Tomters organised Spalding visits to Ireland, Norway and Denmark which did much to promote awareness of the fact that we lagged behind smaller countries in recognising the potential of peat and what could be done to sustain the resource in the United Kingdom. That peat is now the subject of annual conferences through the International Peat Association owes much to the Tomters' imagination and energy.

Norrie Tomter was the daughter of a Scottish mother from Broughty Ferry on the Tay and a Swedish ship captain trading largely in Baltic and Memel pine and pit props for

the mining industry. When the family moved south from the Tay to the Forth Tomter attended Leith Academy and won a good honours degree in English at Edinburgh University.

In 1950 she married Donald Fraser, a schoolteacher, and moved to London for some years, returning after his death and her second marriage to Anders Tomter. In her fifties, as her husband's health declined, she took a job at Bexley Academy on the Forth where she had the classroom next to mine; she was an imaginative and much-liked indeed, inspirational –

if not much obeyed, teacher of literature.

Literature was her first love. With the support of Hugh MacDiarmid and J.D. Fergusson, she edited the *New Scotland* and the *New Scot* magazines in the 1950s; her contributors embraced the whole range of Edinburgh literati of the day. She also edited *Sir Edward McCall: a maker of modern Scotland* (1956), which set out the achievements of McCall and Tom Johnston, Winston Churchill's wartime Labour Secretary of State, in founding the North of Scotland Hydro Electric Board. It is a fascinating story.

Politically she was deeply interested, and espoused any party that was likely to listen to her ideas of the moment. With her first husband, Donald Fraser, she lived in London and was a joint-founder with Tom Burns of the London Scots Self-Government Committee, which presided over by Tom Johnston, revived Keir Hardie's interest in Scottish self-government. Years later, in March 1979, Tomter was sad and disappointed at the result of the referendum on devolution, and beside herself

with anger at the Labour Vote No Campaign in general and me at its epicentre in particular.

One of her great causes – she was never without a cause or two, most of them worthwhile – was the construction of a peat-fired fire station on the island of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides. This would have come to fruition had it not been for rapid strides in the technology of undersea electric cable. Another cause was the cleaning-up of the Union Canal between Glasgow and Edinburgh for boating and recreational purposes. This is now coming about. Tomter was before her time.

Norrie Tomter was a leading light in the West Lothian History and Amenity Society. Her last cause was for the phased re-roofing of Linlithgow Palace, birthplace of Mary Queen of Scots. To her joy, this was coming to fruition before she died.

Tan Dalyell

Norrie Jane Boberg, editor, environmentalist, teacher; born Island of Gotland, Sweden, 28 May 1906; married 1930 Donald Fraser (deceased); secondly Anders Tomter (deceased); died Edinburgh 7 March 1996.

Forthcoming
marriages

Mr M. Prentice
and Miss C. Williams

The engagement is announced between Claire, daughter of John and Florence Bradbury-Williams, of Taunton, formerly of Maidstone, and Michael, son of Michael Bryan Prentice, of Portlock Weir, Somerset, and Anna Maria Prentice, of Cruxton Morehead, Tiverton, Devon.

Birthdays

Sir Brian Bailey, former chairman, Television South West, 73; Mr Dudley Barker, writer, 88; Major Sir Stan Blewitt, Keeper of the Privy Purse, 81; Mr Humphrey Burton, writer and broadcaster, 65; Sir Kenneth Carlisle, MP, 55; Mr Lawrence Cunliffe, MP, 67; Mr Stephen Dorrell, Secretary of State for Health, 44; Professor Mary Douglas, anthropologist, 75; Professor Sir Raymond

Firth, anthropologist, 95; Mr Nigel Furman, MP, 53; Professor Sir Patrick Forrest, surgeon, 73; Mr Robert Fox, Impressionist, 44; Miss Aretha Franklin, singer, 54; Sir Peter Gibbs, former chairman, Anglia TV, 77; Mr Paul Michael Glaser, actor, 52; General Sir James Glover, former Commander-in-Chief, UK Land Forces, 67; Mr David Hicks, interior designer, 67; Mr Elton John, rock singer, 49; Mr Geoffrey John, chairman, Food from Britain, 62; The Most Revd Archibald Rice Jones, Archbishop of Wales, 62; Mr Nick Lowe, composer, 47; Sir Bernard Miller, turner, 75; John Lewis Partnership, 92; Mr Leif Mills, general secretary, Banking, Insurance and Finance Union, 60; Lord Quinton, former chairman of the Board, British Library, 71; Mrs Dorothy Squires, singer, 81; Mr William Taylor, Commissioner, City of London Police, 49; Lord Walker of Worcester, former MP, 62; Mr Andrew Whittam, director-general, British Red Cross Society, 49; Mr Keith

Whitson, chief executive, Midland Bank.

Anniversaries

Births: Henry VI, king of England, 1437; Mathias Corvinus the Younger, 1458; Jeanne d'Arc, 1431; William Hamilton (of Baugur), poet, 1754; Joachim Murat, "Joseph Napoleon", King of Naples, 1767; Jean-Baptiste Paulin Guérin, painter, 1783; François-Joseph Fétis, composer and musicologist, 1784; Giovanni Battista Amici, astronomer and optician, 1786; Alexander Ivanovich Herzen, journalist and author, 1812; John Gutzon de la Mothe Borglum, sculptor, 1867; Arthur Toscanini, conductor, 1867; Hermann Abert, musicologist, 1871; Béla Bartók, composer, 1881; Andy Clyde, actor and comedian, 1892; Jean Sablon, singer, actor and composer, 1906; Alan John Perch, 1906; Jerry Livingston, historian, 1909; Death: Nicholas Hawkmoor, 1705. Deaths: King George II, 1727; Roderich, archbishop of Salzburg, 1739; King George III, 1820; King George IV, 1830; King George V, 1936; King George VI, 1952; King George VII, 1957; King George VIII, 1959; King George IX, 1965; King George X, 1972; King George XI, 1975; King George XII, 1976; King George XIII, 1977; King George XIV, 1978; King George XV, 1979; King George XVI, 1980; King George XVII, 1981; King George XVIII, 1982; King George XVII, 1983; King George XVII, 1984; King George XVII, 1985; King George XVII, 1986; King George XVII, 1987; King George XVII, 1988; King George XVII, 1989; King George XVII, 1990; King George XVII, 1991; King George XVII, 1992; King George XVII, 1993; King George XVII, 1994; King George XVII, 1995; King George XVII, 1996; King George XVII, 1997; King George XVII, 1998; King George XVII, 1999; King George XVII, 2000; King George XVII, 2001; King George XVII, 2002; King George XVII, 2003; King George XVII, 2004; King George XVII, 2005; King George XVII, 2006; 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business

Company results and bets on the next rates move continue to dominate

Company results should continue to dominate the stock market this week, although with the Bundesbank in session on Thursday interest rates considerations, which have tended to fade into the background, could again influence proceedings.

Blue chips, partly on political uncertainties, have lost much of their luster during the current results season but there is no doubt that the deluge of figures has been generally beaten at the upper end of expectations.

The underlying firmness of the market and its satisfaction with the run of results is reflected in the performance of second-line shares. The 250 equities trading in the shadow of the 100 blue chips.

Whereas the blue chip index, the FTSE 100, is some distance from its peak the supporting index has been persistently hitting new highs.

There must be a possibility that as Thursday approaches speculation could mount about a German interest rate cut. And should the Germans, as some suspect, nudge rates lower the market will see pressure developing on the UK authorities for a further reduction.

Corporate activity and share buy-backs are two other big influences on the market. Since

the £5.9bn fast and furious battle between Granada and Forte there has, to the surprise of most observers, been little takeover activity. Trafalgar House has fallen for £900m to Kværner, the Norwegian group, and South West Water has attracted the attention, but as yet no bids, of Severn Trent and Wessex Water.

Still in the market, as far as bids are concerned, bop springs eternal. Ladbroke Group remains the punters' favourite, with Cable & Wireless and an array of electric and water utilities not far behind.

Share buy-backs – an admission that a company is short of ideas on how to spend its cash – are a regular feature of market life. Guinness, the brewing and distilling giant, demonstrated the habit was alive and well on Friday when it splashed out £463m on 100 million shares.

Among the more intriguing

results due this week are Inchcape and Kingfisher. Inchcape, largely because of the strength of the Japanese yen and the problems of the car industry, has had a depressing time. Its shares, 262p on Friday, were 623p three years ago. Profits were £271.4m in 1993. Today the new chairman, Sir Colin Marshall, is expected to show profits of £140m which could be hit by exceptional items.

It is possible Sir Colin will also suffer the indignity of presiding over a dividend cut.

NatWest Securities, the investment house, believes if the dividend is to be lowered it should be sooner rather than later. "A cut is more palatable

STOCK MARKET WEEK

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

if Inchape can outline what it intends to do with the cash saved," it says.

Kingfisher, reporting on Wednesday, is expected to demonstrate that Sir Geoff Mulcahy, chief executive, has delivered his promise to avoid the disastrous mistakes of 1994 when Kingfisher had the dubious distinction of being the worst-performing blue chip. Profits will not be devoid of growth this year, £275m against £244.2m is likely.

Do-it-yourself is Kingfisher's big problem. Like others in this once booming corner of the retail market it has found the going exceedingly tough with profits under intense pressure.

It is possible Sir Geoff will use the occasion of the group's results to announce some sweeping changes at B&Q, its DIY off-shoot.

Next, another entry for Thursday, should by contrast, produce another set of splendid figures, say a 20 per cent gain to £23m.

The market expects P&O, reporting tomorrow, to accompany what will be uninspiring figures with details of disposals. Perhaps Bovis, the group's building off-shoot, will be sold.

P&O's cross-channel ferries are clearly feeling the pinch and its container business is under pressure. But cruising is one area where P&O should be prospering. Profits are likely to come in at around £305m against £341.4m.

Barratt Developments on Wednesday should show that housebuilders can still lift profits, even when their market

is deeply depressed. Sir Lawrie Barratt, chairman, could produce year's profits of £17.7m against £16.1m.

Taylor Woodrow tomorrow will also push profits ahead, perhaps producing £48.5m against £42.8m. But a sharp profits fall is signalled at Caradon, the building products and security printing group, and £155m is possible against £201.2m when it reports on Wednesday.

Shares of the group, valued at £80 against nearly £1bn at its peak, have been firm on hopes of a trading recovery and corporate action with the reclusive Barclay brothers mentioned as possible predators.

Manchester United, one of five quoted football clubs, kicks in with figures tomorrow. But the market could be more interested in the football club's television ambitions. Profits could surge to nearly £19m, against the £10.8m produced last time.

provide further evidence of recovery on Thursday. Although it is expected to make another loss, it will be about £4.5m against £64.1m last time. The hotel industry has so far managed to shrug off the impact of IRA bombing and continue its recovery from the recession that devastated so many companies a few years ago. There are hopes QMH should be in profit this year.

Shares of the group, valued at £80 against nearly £1bn at its peak, have been firm on hopes of a trading recovery and corporate action with the reclusive Barclay brothers mentioned as possible predators.

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Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E	Code	Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E	Code	Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E	Code	Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E	Code	Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E	Code
Alcoholic Beverages						Alloy	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Alta	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Alta	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Alta	100	-10	1.1	12	100
Banks, Merchant						Amoco	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Amoco	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Amoco	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Amoco	100	-10	1.1	12	100
Banks, Retail						Anglo American	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo American	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo American	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo American	100	-10	1.1	12	100
Breweries, Pubs & Rest.						Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100
Diversified Industrials						Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100
Electronics						Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100
Engineering Vehicles						Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100
Extractive Industries						Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100
Food Manufacturers						Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100
Electronics						Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100
Gas						Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100
Distribution						Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100
Investment Companies						Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100
Health Care						Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100
Household Goods						Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100
Investment Trusts						Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100
Leisure & Hotels						Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100
Printing & Paper						Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-Dutch	100	-10	1.1	12	100
Other Financial						Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-10	1.1	12	100	Anglo-United	100	-1			



GAVYN DAVIES

'On launch day, the European Central Bank will formally become responsible for monetary and exchange rate policy; the euro will become a currency in its own right; and exchange rates will be totally fixed against the euro.'

Living with the euro: the user's guide to 1999

At a European summit in two years - as scheduled to take place in Britain of all places - the first set of full participants in economic and monetary union will be determined.

Financial markets are already becoming highly exercised about this. However, if my experience is anything to go by, the main focus so far has been on what will happen before the start date. It is time to focus on what life will be like after 1999. Here are some pertinent questions and answers.

When will the single currency be launched? Assuming the Maastricht timetable sticks, the intention is to launch the euro on 1 January 1999. However, there has been increasing talk of a "technical delay" or "stopping the clock at one minute to midnight". Either device might be used to delay the launch date for up to a year, while continuing to proceed under the umbrella of Maastricht. On launch day, the European Central Bank will formally become responsible for monetary and exchange rate policy; the euro will become a currency in its own right; and exchange rates will be totally fixed against the euro within the EMU group.

So domestic currencies such as the mark will continue to exist? Up to a point. Although many transactions will continue to be denominated in marks, francs etc, and although these national currencies will continue to circulate in the form of notes and coins, they will no longer be genuine independent cur-

rencias. They will be freely interchangeable in infinite quantities at fixed rates against the euro and will, in theory, simply be different names for the same currency, the euro. There will be no "big bang". The euro will develop its role at different speeds in different markets until July 2002, when all other currencies will be finally withdrawn.

Isn't there a risk that the Bundesbank will act the same way under EMU? No, because it will not be allowed to. The Bundesbank will have no control over monetary policy in Germany, and will be able to issue marks only under the authorisation of the ECB. It will therefore become nothing more than an operating arm of the ECB.

Does that mean the system cannot break up? In theory, the system cannot break up. And in practice, it is far less likely to break up than the old ERM. But we cannot be absolutely certain of its durability. For example, if people think that there is a risk of a future German government pulling out of the system, and re-establishing the mark as an appreciating currency in its own right, they may choose to hold marks in preference to either francs or euros in the early stages, just

as they convey people that they will always provide enough marks for euros to keep the exchange rates totally fixed, sizeable speculation against the parties may never occur. But if it does, they will allow the interest rate on the mark to fall below that on the franc and euro, thus discouraging people from holding too many marks.

But you said that there would be a single monetary policy? How can there be more than one interest rate? Good point.

The ECB will conduct all of its internal monetary policy interventions in euros, and hope that the interest rates on marks and francs will be almost exactly equal to those on the euro.

But if the markets believe there is a risk of a future change in the exchange rates, they will force interest rates to diverge between the mark and franc to compensate them for this risk, and there is nothing the ECB can do to prevent this.

Of course, such interest rate divergences will be highly inconvenient to say the least, since they may be directly the opposite of what the French and German economies need in terms of monetary policy.

So you think the system could end in disaster after all? It is not very likely, provided that the initial launch is at the right exchange rates, and provided it commands wide political consent from all members.

But if the launch is rushed, a subsequent bust-up is certainly a possibility, at least in

the period when marks and francs are circulating alongside the euro.

Since the system could be broken up, does that mean a decision to join is reversible? Technically, a member state could choose to opt out fairly easily, at least up to 2002, when its own currency denominations would still be circulating in people's pockets and in bank accounts. After that, with the euro holding a monopoly inside the EMU, it would be harder to withdraw, but still technically feasible. The trouble is that the knowledge that a sovereign government could one day withdraw would always prevent the system from attaining absolute credibility. It would be a potential fault line in the system.

What can be done to enhance credibility? The most obvious thing would be completely to withdraw all the domestic currency units (marks, francs, etc) immediately in 1999. But this has been strongly opposed by the Germans, probably because they fear that the early withdrawal of the mark would not be acceptable to the German electorate. So instead they prefer to proceed by stealth, leaving the mark in people's pockets to prevent a political furor, even though they know that control over monetary policy will be immediately ceded by the Bundesbank.

Isn't that a bit sneaky? Yes, very sneaky. But even the most ardent supporters of EMU think it would be difficult to sell the concept to the German electorate if they really knew what was going on.

A philosopher in the home of the brash

Salomon Brothers has always had a name for being a damned good trader, but only that. Its new European chief has plans to take it further

Beating about the bush is not a trait of Peter Middleton. "Our ambition has to be, by the year 2000, to be one of the top three houses in Europe across the investment banking board."

Tough talking given that, of the four Wall Street behemoths, Salomon Brothers is by far the least known for investment banking expertise, and faces in Europe some impressive homegrown competitors with global ambitions of their own.

It is also a push, those with longish City memories would report, that Salomon has made before, and more.

than once, and never stuck it out. They are traders, damned good traders, but traders they will always be.

THE MONDAY INTERVIEW
PETER MIDDLETON

The expansion has been all the easier, Mr Middleton readily admits, because of the "opportunities in the difficulties of some of our competitors". But Salomon's poaching is only increasing the pressure on Salomon's European business, is convinced the world is in for a surprise. Those who still think of Salomon Brothers as essentially bond traders and risk-takers must think again, he says.

The buzz is client relationships, equities and banking. It only takes a trip up the long escalator to Salomon's European headquarters above Victoria station in London to appreciate the physical dimensions of the massive expansion under way.

The once cavernous atrium is being sliced away to create new floors of offices for the bankers. Several tens of millions of dollars have been budgeted to be spent each year for the next five years on a hiring and development programme aimed at transforming Salomon Brothers' profile in the City.

"The fact that our investment banking is not seen as a real powerhouse is one of the things motivating us," says Mr Middle-

The big change is the number of talented people wanting to join us'

ton. Having previously spent his energy trying to claw Lloyd's of London back from the brink of self-annihilation, it makes a change for Mr Middleton to be concentrating on building. And so doing, he is helping shape a cultural revolution in the City, certainly on this side of the Atlantic, Salomon Brothers, it seems itself.

"What I have to do is to just assemble the people needed for the new business, but make sure these people all have clear business objectives, to foster a management culture a firm not always best known for that," he says.

In the space of a little over a year, Salomon Brothers in London has increased its European equity products team to 95 from 80.

There were six analysts a year ago, now there are 37 with 10 to come. The latest high-profile hire is from Merrill Lynch, the top-ranked merchant bank, Richard Dale and Peter, known in the City as Chip & Dale.

stuff, but it does make a difference between a firm that has a lot of individual talent firing away, and a coherent team that is powerful because united."

He is also putting emphasis on developing people and training to make them better at what they do. "We have tended in the past to put people in a seat and say, right, you are in such and such a product area, start phoning clients. We need to train people on how to manage client relationships."

Senior executives have regular business planning meetings, focusing on where they want to be 18 months from now, and they are all expected to take a

period of training each year. "That is how you link management with profit, not just by removing inefficiencies, but by getting people with training to be better."

He adds: "One of the reasons why there is a need for management skills in institutions like this is precisely because you do have to try to bind people to a company by factors other than money."

In advocating change, Mr Middleton is pushing on doors already well opened by the bond trading scandal in 1991.

The expansion has been all the easier, Mr Middleton readily admits, because of the "opportunities in the difficulties of some of our competitors". But Salomon's poaching is only increasing the pressure on Salomon's European business, is convinced the world is in for a surprise. Those who still think of Salomon Brothers as essentially bond traders and risk-takers must think again, he says.

The buzz is client relationships, equities and banking. It only takes a trip up the long escalator to Salomon's European headquarters above Victoria station in London to appreciate the physical dimensions of the massive expansion under way.

The once cavernous atrium is being sliced away to create new floors of offices for the bankers. Several tens of millions of dollars have been budgeted to be spent each year for the next five years on a hiring and development programme aimed at transforming Salomon Brothers' profile in the City.

"The fact that our investment banking is not seen as a real powerhouse is one of the things motivating us," says Mr Middle-

The big change is the number of talented people wanting to join us'

ton. Having previously spent his energy trying to claw Lloyd's of London back from the brink of self-annihilation, it makes a change for Mr Middleton to be concentrating on building. And so doing, he is helping shape a cultural revolution in the City, certainly on this side of the Atlantic, Salomon Brothers, it seems itself.

"What I have to do is to just assemble the people needed for the new business, but make sure these people all have clear business objectives, to foster a management culture a firm not always best known for that," he says.

In the space of a little over a year, Salomon Brothers in London has increased its European equity products team to 95 from 80.

There were six analysts a year ago, now there are 37 with 10 to come. The latest high-profile hire is from Merrill Lynch, the top-ranked merchant bank, Richard Dale and Peter, known in the City as Chip & Dale.



Advocate for change: Peter Middleton is pushing on doors already opened by the bond trading scandal in 1991

Photograph: Edward Webb

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I think a lot of good things came out of that awful trauma of 1991'

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When ignorance is bliss

For the past decade and a half, scientists around the world have been combing through human DNA looking for the causes of inherited diseases such as cystic fibrosis and Huntington's disease. The idea was that people at risk of such conditions would want to take a genetic test.

But the researchers' expectations have been confounded. People are queuing up *not* to be tested. Last week, at a meeting in Cambridge, held in a room adjacent to the one where, in 1953 James Watson and Francis Crick discovered the DNA double helix, the realisation gradually dawned that delivering genetic medicine to patients in the hospital clinics may prove a more difficult task than Watson and Crick's original discovery.

One mark of the doubt creeping in was last week's publication of a book detailing the first serious studies of how ordinary people react when confronted with the news that their family may have a genetic condition. The book's title is suggestive: *The Troubled Helix* – a deliberate play on the title of James Watson's account of the original discovery, *The Double Helix*.

One triumph of genetics was the isolation and identification in 1993 of the precise genetic damage responsible for causing the degenerative brain condition Huntington's disease. This is incurable, invariably fatal and afflicts about one in 5,000 people in Britain. The children of someone with Huntington's have a 50:50 chance of getting

Most people at risk of genetic illness are refusing to have DNA tests.

Tom Wilkie examines the facts that are confounding scientists

the disease. But because it only "kicks in" comparatively late – around 40 or later – someone at risk has no means of knowing for sure. If they do develop the disease, they may by then have had children themselves. Their children in turn will have a 50:50 risk of disease.

When the gene was discovered in 1993, Dr Jo Green of the university's Centre for Family Research told last week's meeting, genetics researchers assumed there would be a high demand for the test developed shortly afterwards. "But only a minority of those at risk came forward for testing, around 10 per cent." Although the condition is inherited equally by both sexes, more women than men came forward for testing.

Dr Green warned that even those who get a favourable result from the genetic test have difficulties coming to terms with it. There can be "survivor guilt" and a loss of identity with the rest of the family. They find it difficult to tell other family members of their result, especially siblings, because they think "if it's not me, it must be my brother or sister," Dr Green said.

Prenatal testing for Huntington's

is even more fraught. If the foetus proves to be carrying the gene, then it means that the at-risk parent also certainly carries the gene and will get the disease. "If you decided to abort," Dr Green pointed out, "it's in effect aborting yourself – it's a statement about the value of your own life."

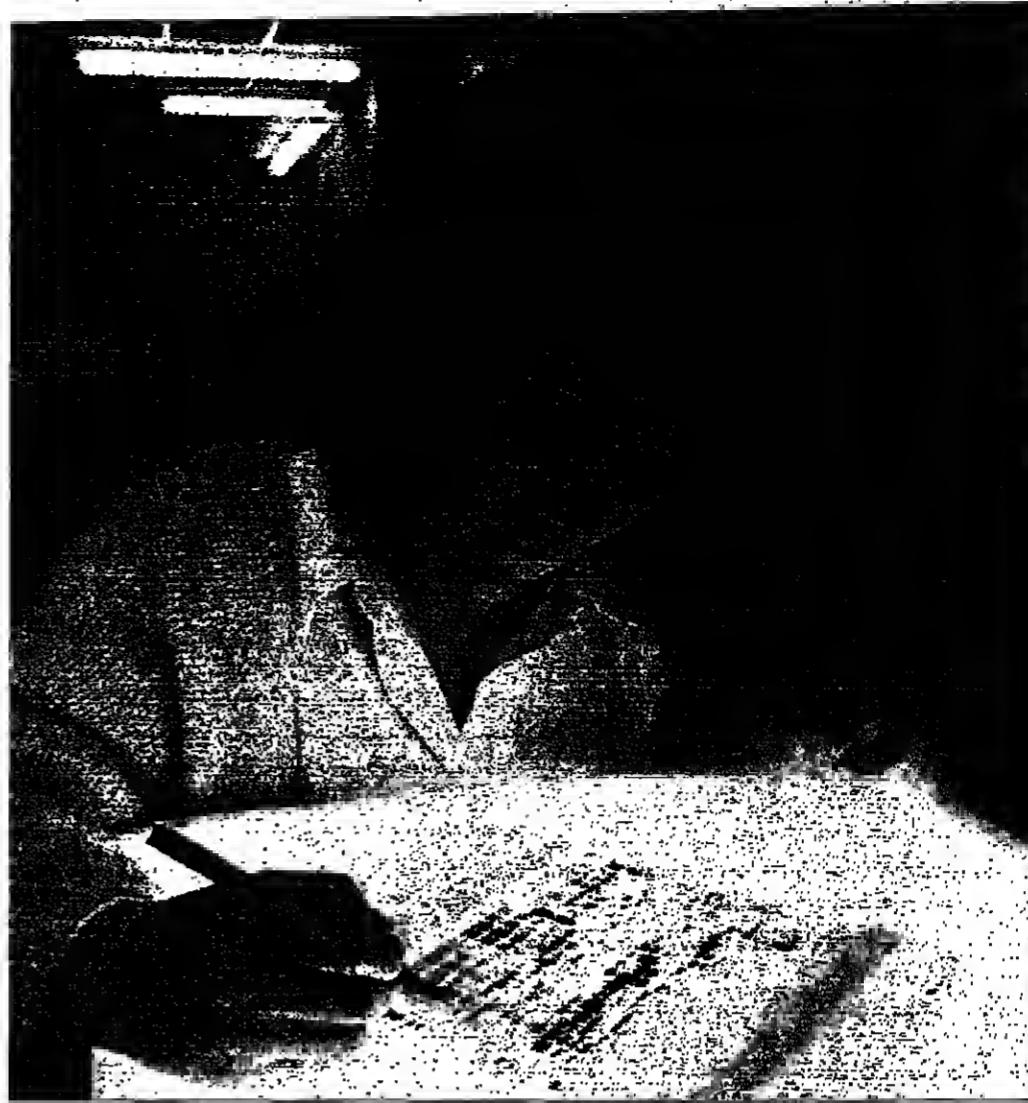
The implementation of carrier testing has stalled in the UK and the US, Professor Marteau said. Among those tested, "over time, there was a loss of understanding of individuals' carrier status. More counselling at the time of testing is not the answer."

The Government's response to these problems has been confused and uncertain. In January, it announced the setting up of a small advisory committee. But its remit is so narrow that the committee is unlikely even to touch the issues discussed at Cambridge – the very issues that may determine whether genetic tests, developed with the best of intentions, help or harm those families most vulnerable to genetic disease.

The Troubled Helix – Social and Psychological Implications of the New Human Genetics, edited by Theresa Marteau and Martin Richards, Cambridge University Press.

Gene testing: high technology but low uptake

Photograph: Rex Features



There's an action-packed drama in the heavens this month. Even as you read this, Comet Hyakutake is skimming past the Earth, far closer than any other heavenly body except the Moon in a celestial show that will continue through to the end of April. It's joined by a dazzling appearance from Venus and – a one-night special – a total eclipse of the Moon.

In the last week of March, Comet Hyakutake heads almost directly over the Earth's north pole on its way towards the Sun. It's conveniently close to the Plough (Ursa Major) and to the Pole Star, Polaris. To find the Pole Star, follow the last two stars of the Plough downwards.

Comets do not zoom through the sky like shooting stars. They

Prepare yourself for a once-in-a-lifetime spectacle

April will see a total lunar eclipse and the passing of a new comet, report **Heather Couper and Nigel Henbest**

move gradually. The chart shows just where to find Hyakutake at 10pm each evening.

This comet could be the brightest for 20 years. Astronomers can predict exactly "where" comets will be, but it's rash to predict how bright they will be.

There have been many splendid comet "flops", the most famous being Kohoutek in 1973. Billed as "comet of the century", it was scarcely visible to the naked eye. Hyakutake should do better. The International Astronomical Union reckons it will reach mag-

nitude 1, matching the first magnitude stars shown as star-symbols on the chart. The British Astronomical Association thinks it could be several times brighter, more brilliant than the brightest star, Sirius.

But don't expect too much from Hyakutake. These days, we are treated to fireworks displays and laser shows that have given us a heightened expectation of what a celestial display should look like. There may not be much of a tail this week, either.

If you have a clear north-western horizon, you can witness a once-in-a-lifetime event on the night of 3-4 April. The full

Moon will drown out the comet, but as the Moon enters eclipse (see below), the sky will darken and the comet will seem to appear out of nowhere.

Comet fever will abate for a few days, as Hyakutake moves away from the Earth. As it swings towards the Sun, however, the increasing heat on the Moon to be seen from this country since November 1993, so it'll be worth staying up till half past midnight to watch the full Moon fade from sight as it moves into the Earth's shadow. The eclipse starts at 11.21pm on 3 April, and the Moon is fully eclipsed by 00.26am (4 April). The Moon starts to reappear at 1.53am, and the eclipse is over by 2.59am.

Astronomers can predict the instant the eclipse will occur, but not how it will look. During some eclipses, the Moon disappears completely. Sometimes, it glows a dull copper even in mid-eclipse, lit by sunlight bent round in the Earth's atmosphere. The amount of illumina-

tion depends on the state of the Earth's atmosphere: it must be clear of clouds and dust if sunlight is to reach the Moon.

The last two total lunar eclipses in 1992 and 1993 were unusually dark (the Moon seemed to disappear) because the Earth's atmosphere was polluted with ash from the eruption of Mount Pinatubo in 1991. This dust has settled, so we may see a reddish ghost of the Moon throughout the eclipse.

Without comet and eclipse excitement, Venus would be the star of the month. It is the dazzling object in the west after sunset, some 15 times brighter than the most brilliant star. Low down in the evening twilight, later in April, you may catch a glimpse of the other "evening star", the tiny planet Mercury.

Jupiter is rising in the south-east around 2am, while Saturn

and Mars are too close to the Sun to be seen this month. Around 21 April we'll be treated to shooting stars radiating outwards from the constellation Lyra. It won't be a major storm, though, more a light shower.

Leo dominates the southern sky with Virgo to the lower left. Its brightest star, Spica, lies near to the Moon during the lunar eclipse on 3 April. The bright star above is Arcturus in the constellation Boötes (the herdsman).

Diary (all times BST)

1 April: Venus at greatest eastern elongation

3-4 April, 11.21pm-1.53am: total eclipse of the Moon 4.10.7am: full Moon

11 April, 0.36am: Moon at last quarter

17 April, 11.49pm: new Moon

21 April, maximum of Lyrid meteor shower

23 April: Mercury at greatest eastern elongation

25 April, 9.40pm: Moon at first quarter

Hyakutake on the Internet, Section Two, page 12

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By Portia

25 Trouble is I misplaced working gear (6,4)

26 Affair is taking in girl (4)

27 Person who can't be trusted with relief money (6)

28 Type of international show by new European conservation body (8)

DOWN

2 He seizes power held by lion-shark (7)

3 Declare one's against point brought forward (9)

4 Offhand remark? (2,3)

5 Not involved in shooting? (3,2,3,7)

6 Getting on before, ahead of churchman (7)

7 Unstable foundation extended by a yard (5)

8 Become conscious of plane (7)

15 Build up case involving key army personnel (9)

17 Sounds like metal's not all excellent (7)

18 Vocal colour added by novice music producer (7)

20 Issue of civil disorder's a non-starter (7)

22 A cure turned up for Greek guy (5)

24 Proceed to ask for money that's readily available (12,3)

ACROSS

1 He speculates endlessly on a road round African city (8)

6 Stage direction put into words (6)

9 Repents of deception we're told (4)

10 Character's eccentric means of communication (6-4)

11 Work over time with expert on a musical genre (5,5)

12 Note returns being taken round mid-September time (4)

13 Many come down channel (5)

14 At last, he's doing a job (9)

16 Make a move to dance? (4,5)

19 Pin money one earns (5)

21 Second-class star (4)

23 No, crime is uncommon on American islands in the Pacific (10)

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